THE
NEW YORK LEDGER
DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XVI. R. BONNER, {EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 40 PARK ROW. NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 23, 1861. TERMS, {$2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 51.

SONG.

BY ALICE CARY.

In the days so sad and olden,
In the days whose lights are few,
One light lieth clear and golden,
One light lieth ever new.
Oh Love! 'tis thine, 'tis thine!
Once mine, thou art always mine.

In the years which men surrender
To silent darkness and dust,
There soundeth one voice so tender—
One voice I can always trust.
Oh Love! 'tis thine, 'tis thine!
Once mine, thou art always mine.

In th' nights that storm-clouds cover,
When th' moon and th' stars are gone,
One hand like a daisy snowed over
With beauty, still beckons me on.
Oh Love! 'tis thine, 'tis thine!
Once mine, thou art always mine.

◆

THE MUTE SINGER.

BY ANNA CORA RITCHIE.

CHAPTER IX.

LOST GIFTS.

The shadowy light of morning had merged into broad day, but all was quiet in Sylvie's little chamber. Her mother stole softly in and found her sleeping; but, ever and anon, she stirred uneasily, uttering faint moans. Her breathing was labored—her long hair, loosened by her unquiet movements, swept over the couch in wild disorder—her arms were tossed above her head; she had flung aside the bed-covering, as though its weight oppressed her. Madame de la Roche watched her for a few moments, then hastened to inform her husband, almost with an air of exultation at this proof of her own sagacity, that her sad predictions were surely verified. He received the communication with merry disbelief, and said if Sylvie slept she was doing well, and that breakfast need not longer be delayed. as he had business on hand. The business in question was simply to get rid of a portion of the sum that remained out of his daughter's scanty store.

Shortly after the meal was over, Ursule came to inquire after her beloved little friend; but, learning that she had not yet waked, noiselessly withdrew.

Mathieu, who was hovering about the entry, greatly troubled at not hearing Sylvie's voice, though her regular hour for practising had long since arrived, ventured to accost the mantua-maker as she passed. A look of satisfaction, pleasant to see, chased the expression of disappointment from his thin, pinched countenance, when he knew that the gentle songstress was still slumbering, and he magnanimously replied that, although he always felt restless and comfortless when he missed her singing of a morning, he wished she might sleep all day!

It seemed likely that his generous desire would be gratified, for, when Maitre Beaujeu came to the door, a couple of hours later, Madame de la Roche, who wandered in and out of Sylvie's room every few minutes, informed him that she was still sleeping, but very uncomfortably, and it was *her* opinion that she was seriously ill.

If this suggestion had emanated from any one but Madame de la Roche, Maitre Beaujeu would have felt concerned, but he was so much accustomed to her dark-side view of events, and her constant cry of "wolf," that, without noticing the alarming conclusion at which she had arrived, he whisperingly charged her not to disturb her daughter, closed the door without sound, and went away, content that his pupil was resting, and gaining new strength.

Prompted by the feminine spirit of contradiction, and further instigated by her dislike to acknowledge Maitre Beaujeu's authority, Madame de la Roche returned to Sylvie's bedside, and, as her daughter's head rolled backward and forward on the pillow, stooped over and spoke to her. Sylvie gave no sign of hearing, but her head still swayed to and fro, the black tresses coiling and tangling with the motion. Her mother, with rapidly increasing agitation, called her in a louder tone, still—no answer; she took her hands, but even a violent pressure produced no effect; then, seriously frightened, she shook the slumbering maiden, but wholly failed to rouse her. Almost beside herself, the panic-stricken woman rushed down stairs to Ursule, and implored her to hasten to Sylvie, who was probably dying.

Ursule waited not to ask questions, or to ponder upon Madame de la Roche's unconquerable tendency to exaggeration, but, with rapid steps, outstripped her summoner and stood by her daughter's bed. Sylvie's dishevelled hair, the restless movement of her head, and her pain-betokening attitude, were somewhat startling; but Ursule was prepared for so much worse, that, with a feeling of relief, she smiled at her own forgetfulness of Madame de la Roche's idiosyncracy, which had occasioned her such a moment of anguish.

The self-tormentor was at her side, whispering, "Try to wake her—I could not;—try, and you will see she does not wake."

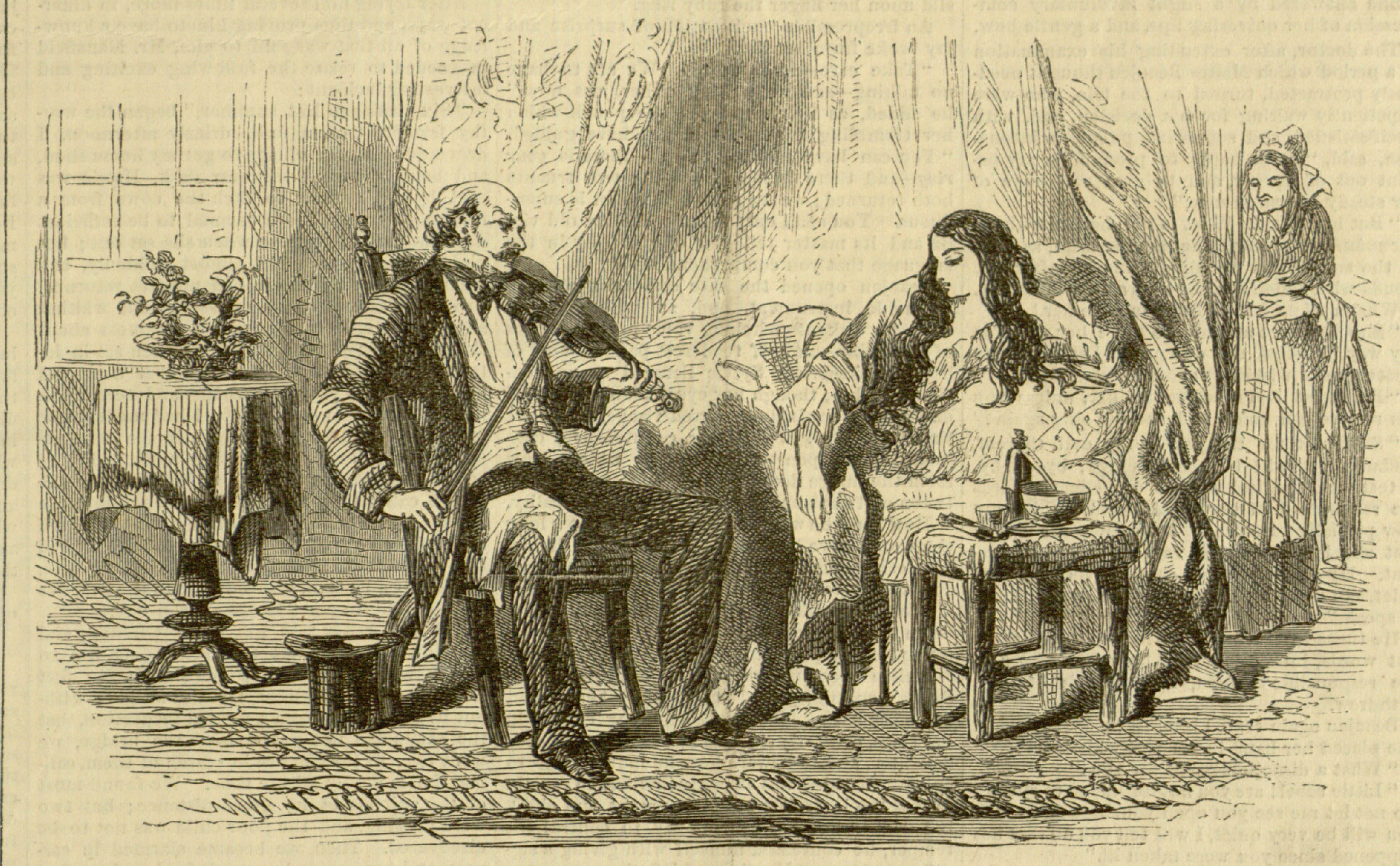
"The sounder she sleeps the better," replied Ursule, repressing her vexation. "Sleep is a panacea for all ills, it would be very inconsiderate, very *wrong* to disturb her."

She saw that Madame de la Roche entertained a different opinion, and, partly to guard Sylvie, partly to divert her thoughts from their present sad direction, Ursule sat down to the work upon which she had been employed when Madame de la Roche burst into her room, and which she still held in her hand.

Madame de la Roche also resumed her needle, and Ursule chatted so cheerfully, though in a low tone, that the dispirited mother was gradually restored to a state of tolerable calmness.

They were sitting at the window in the larger apartment; neither heard a faint exclamation, a sort of choked cry, which issued from behind Sylvie's curtain. It was repeated more audibly, and, in an instant, both were by Sylvie's bedside.

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1861, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]



CONVALESCENCE.

She was sitting up, her lips apart, her large eyes frightfully dilated—actually glaring with horror. As Ursule bent over her she again made a violent effort to speak, but a hoarse murmur was the only sound that broke from her lips.

"Sylvie, what is it, my darling?" asked the dressmaker, disguising her consternation.

The young girl looked at her piteously, and with great difficulty replied, in a stifled whisper, "*I have lost my voice*; I cannot speak louder!"

Ursule glanced at the mother, who stood at the foot of the bed, weeping and wringing her hands, though she had not heard those fatal words.

"Do not agitate yourself, my dear girl," answered Ursule, soothingly, "you will be able to speak in a few minutes. At the worst you have only taken cold, which was very natural. Do not let a transient inconvenience discompose you."

Sylvie pressed her hand thankfully, and replied, in the same painful whisper, "I felt as though I should never speak again—as though I had lost my voice *forever!*"

"What does she say? Why does she whisper? Why does she not speak out and let her poor, afflicted mother hear her?" cried Madame de la Roche, a little testily.

"She has taken cold—it is nothing, nothing at all," replied Ursule; "she is too hoarse to speak loudly. When a person is suffering from hoarseness, it is very wrong to force the voice, or use it at all. Lie down, Sylvie, and do not try to speak one word; you will soon be better. Pray do not go on in that frantic manner, Madame de la Roche, you will excite the child, and increase her fever—pray be quiet!"

"Increase her fever? She has a fever then? But did I not say, long ago, that she would have? Did I not expect it? It has been coming on all this time, and soon it will increase, it is a mercy if we do not lose her!—a mercy which it is in vain *for us* to hope for!"

Ursule almost lost her temper at this ill-judged, but characteristic speech, and could not help reflecting that, after all, there was as much justice as severity in Maitre Beaujeu's remarks, which were never more needed than at that moment.

As if her thoughts had summoned him, his knock, though much softer than usual, was heard at the door.

The mother flew to open it, exclaiming, "It's all over with us! It has come at last! Oh! my poor Sylvie! my poor Sylvie!"

Beaujeu hurried past her into the inner chamber. Sylvie turned to him with a failing attempt to smile, and, stretching out her hand, murmured, "It is nothing—Ursule says I will be better soon."

"Dear child, why do you whisper?" gasped her teacher.

"I cannot speak! *I have lost my voice!*"

Beaujeu's violin dropped, and would have fallen to the ground, had it not been caught by Ursule; he covered his face with his hands, and a groan, that sounded like the sundering of heart strings, burst from his lips.

"It is nothing—only a cold—only a temporary calamity. In a week she will be herself," cried Ursule, consolingly.

"A week! and I have just made a regular engagement for her which commences before the close of this very week, and she is expected to sing every week for the next three months! If she is not able to fulfil the contract, they will be obliged to engage some one else to take her place! My child! my dear, dear child!"

The old man kissed her forehead again and again, and held her hot hands in his, and smoothed back her matted hair, and looked tenderly into her flushed face. The brilliant woman, who had excited his wonder and admiration last night, had vanished; she was his little, humble, dependent, unfortunate Sylvie again.

She did not seem to notice or to comprehend the intelligence he had just given. With eyes preternaturally bright, she glanced around the room in search of something, then stretched her arm towards the little table and tried to grasp a book. Ursule handed it to her—it was her Bible. From between the leaves she took a withered flower; no one present recognized the faded sprig of heliotrope. Beaujeu alone might have known from whence it came, but his mind was too full of distress for reminiscences that could have given the key to this action. She muttered incoherently as she held the scentless, colorless flower before her eyes; but the few words that could be distinguished conveyed no meaning—she had become delirious.

"I must summon a doctor at once," said Beaujeu, rising hastily. "Keep her quiet, good Ursule, and you Madame, if you have the slightest consideration for your child, you will not distress her and increase the fever from which she is suffering, by letting her see your grief."

If Madame de la Roche made any effort to act upon this suggestion, it was a vain attempt; and Ursule, finding that Sylvie, in brief moments of lucidity, looked at her mother inquiringly and with a troubled expression, insisted upon the latter's withdrawing to her own apartment.

She yielded, sobbing out, "And it has come to this! I am not to take care of my own child! Every one is to have charge of her, and to regulate her, but I!"

Maitre Beaujeu soon returned with Dr. Souvestre, the youthful partner of a physician of high standing, who, being unable personally to attend to his numerous patients, allowed this young assistant to study his profession by practising among the poorer classes, taking or saving lives, as the case might be.

Dr. Souvestre examined the patient with genuine interest, and an assumption of importance and gravity by which he expected to inspire confidence and atone for the absence of grey hairs. Ursule replied to his numerous questions, for Madame de la Roche was either incapable of doing so, or chose to remain obstinately silent.

He casually asked, "Are you her mother, Madame?" Then the weeping woman started forward and replied eagerly—"No—no—that she is not! *I* am her mother—but they give me no power over her! I am nobody! I must see her die and not come to her aid!"

"Since you are her mother, Madame," replied the doctor with some severity, "I must tell you that this violent ebullition is very harmful to *my patient*. I shall be obliged to order you from the apartment unless you are perfectly composed."

Poor Madame de la Roche felt that the doctor also was in league against her, and combining with the others to take her child out of her hands. Dr. Souvestre, without again noticing her, gave his directions to Ursule, wrote a prescription, and charged her not to allow Sylvie to be subjected to the least excitement.

Maitre Beaujeu left the room with him.

"Is she very ill, Doctor?" he inquired.

"I fear she is. The fever has evidently been produced by exposure to cold and wet when her highly sensitive nervous system was in a state of violent excitement."

"But her voice—will she lose her voice?"

"I have not been able to judge of the extent to which her voice is affected, for, as you saw, she did not reply to any of my questions."

"It will not be *possible* for her to be well enough to keep an engagement to sing in a few days—do you think it will?"

Dr. Souvestre lifted his eyebrows, as though he were regarding a man not particularly sound in mind: "Decidedly not."

Beaujeu had not the heart, the courage, to go at once to Monsieur Le Grand and tell him that he must seek for some one to fill Sylvie's place. He absolved himself from that hard duty until the morrow.

That morrow brought no favorable change to Sylvie. Her fever still raged; her voice sank lower and lower; her words, unconnected and wild, were hardly audible at all.

Ursule, unsolicited, filled the post of nurse. Madame de la Roche became more useless than ever. Her husband spent most of his time in trying to prove that this illness could be nothing of importance; that she had simply caught cold when she was heated. He had often taken cold in the same way himself, he added. He was certain she would be restored in a few days—*he always was*; and as for her being a little out of her mind, fever always made *him* light-headed.

"And folly always keeps you so," muttered Beaujeu, gruffly.

It was now absolutely necessary that Monsieur Le Grand should be apprised of the calamity that had befallen the young singer. Maitre Beaujeu's services had been included in Sylvie's engagement. Though his skill as a performer on the violin was incontestible, his talents had not yet received that public recognition which constitutes *fame*, and he doubted whether, apart from Sylvie, he could obtain a hearing.

He made as light as possible of her illness to Monsieur Le Grand, assuring him that it was but a cold, brought on by walking in a pouring rain, owing to the disappearance of their conveyance.

"The indisposition of Mademoiselle de la Roche is a serious calamity at this moment, when she has created such an extraordinary sensation, and every one is on the *qui vive* to hear her. Her fortune was made. Are you sure she cannot appear? Could she not venture upon a single song? or repeat the Semiramide, with Lablache, on Thursday?"

"It will not be possible."

"How vexatious! This is very discomposing! I shall be obliged to engage some one else; but her really wonderful vocalization will render the public very difficult to please. I trust she will recover shortly. One of the disadvantages of our profession is, that if a favorite is not kept constantly before the audience, she is soon forgotten, and it is always hard to re-kindle an enthusiasm which has once died out."

"I will apprise you the instant she is convalescent."

Maitre Beaujeu lingered and hesitated; nothing had been said about *his* expected performance. Le Grand was too much engrossed by the unlooked for disappointment in being deprived of Sylvie, to think of the interests of her tutor.

At last Beaujeu compelled himself to say, with as much indifference as possible; "Allow me to ask whether my services will be needed on Thursday, as before arranged, or whether my engagement depends upon that of Mademoiselle de la Roche?"

Monsieur Le Grand was too admirable a diplomatist not to remember that, as Maitre Beaujeu controlled his pupil, and his pupil would be eagerly sought after by the public, the most politic compliment he could pay the master, was to assume that he was held in high consideration wholly independent of his valuable scholar.

"What a question!" exclaimed the wily principal, with well-feigned surprise. "Of course *your* engagement holds good without the least reference to that of Mademoiselle de la Roche. We could not dispense with you on any account. By the by, allow me to pay you the two hundred francs due. These bad tidings concerning Mademoiselle de la Roche have made me very forgetful."

He counted out the money, and took Beaujeu's receipt.

The music teacher withdrew in the most grateful mood that he had ever experienced. But what was he to do with Sylvie's hundred francs? If he delivered them to her father, they would certainly be squandered; with her mother they would be equally unsafe, for she would yield them to her husband; Sylvie could have no voice in the matter at this moment.

"No voice!" the words, used casually, gave him a sharp pang.

He determined to take Ursule into his confidence, and abide by her advice. As she was always at Sylvie's side, he was obliged to request her to grant him a brief interview in her own room. Had she been less absorbed by the state of her beloved charge, the old maid would have suffered from no little trepidation in consenting to this strange petition; as it was, there was no room in her mind for thoughts of self. When Beaujeu made known his dilemma, she strongly urged him to retain the money, without making any allusion to its having been paid; adding, that if it once passed into the hands of Monsieur de la Roche, it would melt as surely as though it were thrown into a fiery furnace.

"But Sylvie must not lack any comfort," answered Beaujeu.

"I will take care that she does not," replied Ursule. "But her spendthrift father probably has something left of that last hundred francs, the larger portion of which he has amused his mind by throwing away. I will insist upon his expending what remains upon necessary medicines; it will be so much saved."

Ursule found herself mistaken.

When Monsieur de la Roche returned home that very day, it was not with empty hands. He asked his wife for a dish, then daintily uncovered the fanciful basket he carried, and heaped the coarse piece of crockery, which was placed on the table, with luscious hot-house peaches.

"Now let me have your largest jar, filled with water," demanded he, in a tone of pleasant excitement.

The fractured brown jug was silently placed before him. In that he carefully inserted the stems of a costly bouquet. Next he unfolded a paper parcel, and displayed the last new novel, in three volumes, by Eugène Sue.

"You see I have done *my* part towards taking care of the dear child. Those peaches are just the thing for her to relish; and she delights in flowers; this bouquet will charm her. This novel I mean to read aloud to her myself, to amuse her. It is said to be a thrilling narrative, and we shall enjoy all the marvellous incidents and hair-breadth escapes together. The basket is so pretty that I thought I would buy that, too. It may be of use to hold your work, Marguerite," and he tossed a flimsy wicker basket towards his wife.

Ursule, who had been impatiently watching the self-satisfied prodigal, now said, in a tone full of quiet irony:

"I really congratulate you upon the felicitous choice of your purchases; the peaches will probably spoil before Sylvie is able to taste one! The doctor happened to notice the bouquets with which she was so liberally supplied last night, and ordered all flowers to be removed from the room, as hurtful to his patient; so these must go—anywhere you please—out of the window if you like, unless, indeed, you think it was worth spending the sum they cost to bestow them upon *me*. As for the novel, she could neither listen to nor comprehend a single page at present; and, when she is convalescent, I promise you Doctor Souvestre will not allow any work as exciting as the tales of Eugène Sue to be perused in her hearing. Of the basket, I wish you joy, Madame de la Roche, though you have a rather more substantial one by your side."

Monsieur de la Roche looked blank for an instant, but quickly recovered.

Ursule went on mercilessly—

"Now will you have the goodness to give me five francs to pay for the medicine that Doctor Souvestre charged me to procure?"

"Five francs for medicine? What a sum!" exclaimed Everard, drawing out his purse, which was evidently in a state of collapse. "Really, I—I believe—I am not quite certain—yes, it is so, indeed; I have but two francs left!"

"Is Sylvie to go without her medicine, then?" asked Ursule, with tantalizing coolness.

"Of course not—certainly not—that is out of the question," replied de la Roche, wincing.

"It is equally out of the question to procure it without money," she returned, sharply.

"Then we must *borrow*—that is our only resource," he answered, with returning hopefulness. "Let me see; Maitre Beaujeu cannot be afraid to trust us, for there will be a hundred francs passing through his hands for Sylvie, and he can reimburse himself. By the bye, I wonder why Monsieur Le Grand has not paid up yet. I have a great mind to call on him; but it does not do to let such people know that one is out of funds. It is better to apply to Beaujeu. I would rather not ask him myself, but *you* will do it for me, my good, kind Ursule? *You* are always so *ready*, so *obliging*, so *friendly*——"

Ursule interrupted his flattery with—

"For her sake, I undertake to arrange that matter."

And she did. She arranged with Beaujeu to retain Sylvie's money, yet to allow as much as was needed, from time to time, seemingly in the shape of a loan. Quite a masterly stroke, by which Monsieur de la Roche was outwitted without suspecting his generalship.

CHAPTER X.

THE OLD MUSICIAN.

Day followed day, week fled after week, but Sylvie still lay withering under the torrid heat of fever, hourly becoming weaker, and giving no sign of consciousness, though her burning lips ceaselessly moved in soundless mutterings.

One might almost have imagined that it was a gratification to Madame de la Roche to be visited by a positive affliction. The certainty of an actual evil seemed more endurable than the vague dread of some menacing calamity. Then her sad auguries had proved prophetic;—*that* was a cause for self-complacency; and no one could contradict her when she maintained that adversity dogged their steps;—*that* was a decided satisfaction. She was comparatively cheerful under the real, tangible trial, though in the midst of flattering prospects she had been causelessly depressed, and ever watching for possible misfortunes, which loomed up darkly in the distant horizon.

Her husband had refused, as long as he could, to believe that Sylvie's illness was serious; but, as week after week slowly wore away, and even his hopeful vision failed to trace the slightest improvement in her condition, he became silent and gloomy, and almost forsook his home, as though he could fly from its troubles by not witnessing them.

Maitre Beaujeu's character, in which growing tenderness for Sylvie had long since commenced a gradual harmonizing change, was now completely softened by sorrow. Her confiding affection, her appreciating devotion, had penetrated through the hardness, roughness, bitterness of his external husk, into the inner, better nature, that lay buried like a sweet kernel within a tough and prickly rind. Her soft hand had struck chords, deep in his soul, which never before gave forth a sound,—and, but for *her* wakening touch, might have remained mute as death, even *until* death. He had never loved any human being as he loved this patient, clinging, steady-hearted girl. He looked *down* upon her with paternal protection, and looked *up* to her with reverence that recognized her higher, purer mould. His attachment for her touched the secret spring of his long-closed heart, and opened its doors to the rest of mankind;—he hated others less because he loved her better every day;—he was more kindly disposed towards all the world, because the holy mantle of her broad charity swept about his feet. Grief, now mingling with love, melted him to such wondrous gentleness that even Mathieu dared to approach him with anxious inquiries concerning the now silent songstress, who had made all the music of the poor cripple's untuned existence.

Beaujeu was touched by his desolate look and despairing tone, and compelled himself to answer so cheerfully that the heavy shadows upon the boy's countenance grew lighter, as he listened and the old man learned, for the first time, that there was comfort in comforting.

Sylvie's sudden disappearance from the scene of her triumphs, had not proved as detrimental to her tutor's prosperity, as might reasonably have been expected. He was now a regular member of Monsieur Le Grand's *corps*, frequently appearing before critical audiences, and as his musical talent, cultivation and skill grew more and more apparent, steadily winning laurels. All that he had heretofore lacked had been a fair field upon which he could prove his claims to public favor, and he had struggled through half a century without ever planting his foot on that desired ground—the Canaan of the musician! Alas! how many of the noteless gifted toil through long lives, uncrowned and unknown simply because the opportunity to test their powers is never accorded!

Perhaps, after all, it was as needful that the musician's hairs should whiten, before his fingers caught the wizard touch that played, at once, upon heart-strings and upon those of his instrument, as that his violin should require years to gain that exquisite mellowness of tone which it now possessed; for the *old* violin is endowed with a potent sweetness which age only can confer, and which, therefore, never belongs to the *new*.

The "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" tells us that there are fifty-eight different pieces in a violin, and that "those pieces are strangers to each other; and it takes a century, more or less, to make them thoroughly acquainted. At last they learn to vibrate in harmony, and the instrument becomes an organic whole, as it were, a great capsule which had grown from a garden-bed in Cremona or elsewhere. Besides, the wood is juicy, and full of sap, for fifty years or so, but at the end of fifty or a hundred more gets tolerably dry and comparatively resonant." Let us not, then, quarrel with Time, which gives melody, not to the violin only, but to every human instrument, when its construction is fine and susceptible of that gradual progress towards perfection which God orders, and only jarring natures rebel against.

Sylvie had been ill for a month, when, one morning, Ursule, who was sitting beside her, chanced to look up from her work, and found the invalid gazing at her with a totally changed expression. Her eyes, though strangely sunken and far too large for her face, were clear, and calm, and sane; the wild lights had faded out of them;—the fiery spot that had glowed upon her cheeks, until it seemed to have burnt the hollows now visible, was quenched in ashy whiteness; her lips were lightly closed, no longer *compressed*, as they had been of late, when not moving speechlessly. The small, transparent hands were lying placidly on the coverlet.

Her eyes wandered from Ursule's face over the bed covering, and then around the room, as though they were searching for something just laid down. With returning consciousness, her mind had gone back to the last thought by which it was occupied when reason forsook her, and her gaze rested finally on the little Bible. Ursule, without permitting herself to betray the least surprise, handed the volume, opening it at the place where the pressed flower lay between the leaves. She was rewarded by a smile—the first she had beheld for so many weeks.

The next moment Sylvie, laying her hand upon the open page, moved her lips; then an expression of sudden anguish passed over her face.

With a violent effort she whispered, "My voice! My voice! Have I lost my voice?"

Ursule could not command her own to reply.

A shuddering spasm convulsed the young girl's frame, as she wildly tried to force the sounds, which died unuttered in her throat.

Ursule quickly regained her self-possession, and said, "I am so thankful to see you better, dear! You have been very ill."

"How long?" murmured Sylvie, indistinctly.

"More than a month."

After a moment of amazement, Sylvie appeared to be trying to collect her thoughts. She asked, speaking very slowly, but in the same choked tone, "Have—I—lost—my—voice—*forever?*"

"Heaven forbid!" replied Ursule, cheeringly. "Now that you have passed the crisis, we may dare to believe that it will be restored."

Blessed are the words of hope, even when hope is faint—groundless—unreal;—still words that can inspire hope, however fallacious, are full of consolation—full of vitality. Ursule's words not only soothed Sylvie, but imparted new strength to her feeble frame, new courage to her sinking spirit.

Madame de la Roche, who was in her own apartment, having caught the sound of Ursule's voice, now entered. When she saw Sylvie looking perfectly rational, with a passionate burst she threw herself on her knees beside the bed, exclaiming, "My child! my own! my only one! Are you indeed spared? Are you better? Do you know your poor, broken-hearted mother?"

Sylvie's answering caresses replied for her.

"Speak to me! speak to me!" cried Madame de la Roche, embracing her fondly.

Sylvie only sighed.

"You cannot? Your voice—your beautiful voice is gone, then? Ah! will it ever return?"

"If it is God's will!" whispered Sylvie, and her white face grew angelic with the look which said that she could wait for that will to be made apparent—wait and hope—wait, if needs be, *without hope*.

Dr. Souvestre and Maitre Beaujeu now entered.

The instant Sylvie caught sight of the latter, she feebly stretched her arms towards him, but they dropped powerless upon the bed; Ursule divined her intention, and, as the musician bent over her joyfully, lifted up the weak, nerveless arms, and they clasped themselves about his neck.

His face was buried in the bed covering, and his frame shook as though he were weeping. If tears of joy could not find their way to eyes, the channels of which half a century had dried, the freshening drops fell inwardly, and revived his parched spirit.

The hand of Doctor Souvestre upon his shoulder roused him, and he rose, exclaiming, "I'm an old fool! I know it! But it is this little witch who has worried me into my dotage. But now we will have no more nonsense;—she will get well, will she not, Doctor?"

The young physician, who, as usual, endeavored to make up for his lack of years by a great assumption of dignity, did not think fit too hastily to endorse this unprofessional opinion. With a solemn and stately air, he merely desired Maitre Beaujeu, who was nearest to the patient, to have the goodness to stand aside.

Seating himself by Sylvie's bed, the youthful Esculapius placed his fingers deliberately on her pulse, and asked, "Do you know me, Mademoiselle Sylvie?"

She shook her head in the negative.

"Do you remember seeing me when you were taken ill?"

Still a negative motion of the head.

"Do you find yourself unable to speak?"

She answered by a slight involuntary compression of her quivering lips, and a gentle bow.

The doctor, after extending his examination to a period which Maitre Beaujeu thought needlessly protracted, turned to the trio, who were impatiently waiting for his decision, and, with a self-satisfied and somewhat pompous intonation, said, "I am happy to pronounce my patient out of danger, and to give you hope of her steady convalescence."

"But her *voice!* What is her health without her *voice?*" exclaimed the mother, who, as soon as the sun began to shine, hunted after the clouds with which she had such a natural affinity.

What a wicked look Beaujeu gave her!

"She must not attempt to force her voice in any way," replied the doctor. "Let her write whatever she wishes to communicate."

"But what is to become of her, unless you can restore her voice, and she can sing again?"

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof, Madame. It will be time enough, by-and-by, to test what medical science can effect towards the restoration of her vocal chords, which are now partially paralyzed. I congratulate myself that she is progressing very favorably at present. My orders are that she is to be kept very quiet, and not allowed to make the least attempt to speak."

He turned towards Ursule as he uttered these last words, intimating that he regarded *her* as the responsible person, and, gravely bowing, withdrew.

Beaujeu again seated himself by Sylvie's side. She placed her hand in his and whispered:

"What a disappointment for you!"

"Little rebel! are you not forbidden to speak? Do not let me see you open your lips again. If you will be very quiet, I will tell you all that has happened since you were taken ill."

Sylvie looked as though she would have said:

"That is just what I most desire."

Her master went on.

"My disappointment *has*, indeed, been great; but not so great as my sorrow at beholding you suffer. And, though I am a thankless old brute by nature, I have had much to make me grateful. In spite of your illness, Monsieur Le Grand continues my engagement——"

Sylvie's eyes sparkled.

"Ah! I knew you would rejoice, therefore I told you *that* first. I am prospering—gaining ground with the public—making friends and obtaining scholars. And do I not owe all this to the magical voice that melodiously spoke the '*open sesame*,' and threw wide the gates of the great arena, and thrust the old man in to battle for its prizes? Do I not owe it to that studious little pupil, who first drew attention to her obscure master? And though she only flashed like a meteor across the musical firmament, and disappeared, did she not leave a trail of light that ever points to him?"

Sylvie clasped her hands, and no voice was needed to speak her joy.

"But do not suppose the lost Pleiad is forgotten. There are numberless eyes always looking to see it again, and numberless voices constantly accosting me to know if there are signs of its reappearance."

Sylvie's eyes plainly inquired:

"Who asks for me?"

"You would like to know *who?* Why, everyone!

"Monsieur Le Grand asks after you every time he sees me; and the vocalists who envied you, and are glad you are out of their way, make most *tender* inquiries after your health, always hoping to receive the satisfactory answer that you are no better. You look incredulous, nevertheless it is the truth. Then Mademoiselle Belle-Chasse, who is filling your place, as you once filled hers, and who is terribly afraid you will not die, makes more particular and *affectionate* inquiries than any one else; and I always take care to tell her that you will startle the world again before long. Besides these, you have many genuine admirers who ask after you."

Sylvie could not help whispering:

"Who?"

"Will you be silent, and obey orders? Imagine yourself dumb;—or can't you do anything so unnatural to womankind?" Maitre Beaujeu tried to laugh at his own joke, but signally failed. "You want to know who inquires? There's the Count Castellane, for one; and the Duke de ——, for another; and Mademoiselle de St. Amar never tires of asking after you, and talking about you."

A faint rose-hue suffused Sylvie's face, and she sighed softly.

"And her brother, Monsieur le Marquis, has several times sought me to know if you were improving. I hear he is a passionate lover of music, and I made up my mind long since that he is a fine critic. Now I must leave you for awhile, as I have several lessons to give. But did I tell you who had become one of my pupils? I am solely indebted to the sensation you created for that one, and probably she expects me to make her as great a singer as you are, though her voice compares with yours precisely as a very tiny, sweet-toned pipe compares with a superb church organ."

"Who is it?" whispered Sylvie.

"Disobeying again? Then I really think it is time to leave you; besides, it is past the hour for Mademoiselle Honorine's lesson."

Sylvie's eyes opened wide with astonishment, and she drew a long breath.

"I have just commenced teaching the little elf; she has a capital ear and fine taste, but her voice is as small as her fairy-like self; a good-sized cricket would drown it by chirping. Shall I give her a message from you?"

Sylvie made an effort to speak.

"Don't! don't! What an old idiot I was to tempt you! I will invent something that will do quite as well; now, adieu. I shall see you again before night."

Sylvie would have lifted his hand to her lips, but she had not strength. Without noticing the action, he departed.

After her master left, she made no further attempt to speak. Ursule brought her some light nourishment, she reluctantly swallowed a few mouthfuls, and then lay back with closed eyes. Her mother thought she was slumbering, but she was only musing over the past, and counting the blessings granted her in spite of this crushing blow. When she thought of her master, and the bright future opened to him through her humble instrumentality, the sense of gratitude overpowered all other emotions, and she thanked God that she had been able to sing even those three nights, and felt that the loss of her voice was not too great a price to pay for her beloved teacher's prosperity.

Twilight was casting long shadows when Beaujeu returned. The curtain, that divided off Sylvie's room from the general chamber, was thrown back, that she might have free air. She knew his step, and opened her eyes when he entered, and watched him without venturing to utter a word. He laid his violin on the bed, then unfolded a small parcel, and took out a porcelain slate, with a tiny silver pencil attached to it by a silken cord.

"There! This pencil," said he, "is to be the jailer of your tongue. You will write whatever you wish to communicate, but recollect that you are to keep the unruly member in prison until the doctor sets it at liberty. Now let us see what comes next."

He took her wasted hand in his, and gently slid upon her finger the ruby ring.

An irrepressible exclamation of surprise and joy broke from her lips.

"Take care—not a word! We are to have no talking—and no writing either, just now," he added, as Sylvie grasped the pencil which her trembling fingers could not have guided. "You can have nothing to say—there is *your ring*—and there is *my violin*—the two truants both returned; we are quits; comment is superfluous. You shall only listen while the old violin and its master tell you of their joy in the language that you comprehend best."

Beaujeu opened the case and took out the venerable instrument, and, as with masterly hand, he woke its witching voice now to strains of exultation—now of tenderest pathos—now of holy thanksgiving, Sylvie listened as one enchanted; but, though her eyes seemed fastened on the musician's time-scarred visage, it was not that face she saw—another countenance, conjured up by penetrating sounds which drew forth the image deepest in her soul, rose up between and shut out the less captivating reality.

How long he would have played and how long she would have listened, it is not easy to divine. The candle had been lighted for some time, and night was advancing, but Sylvie and her master had neither commenced to grow weary, when their enjoyment met with the jarring interruption of Monsieur de la Roche's entrance.

Maitre Beaujeu rose and, hastily closing Sylvie's curtain, passed out to meet her father, and after telling him of the cheering change in her state, earnestly charged him not to excite his daughter, and to beware how he induced her to speak. Beaujeu was strongly inclined to remain during the interview between parent and child, but doubtful of his own ability to control his temper, he contented himself with giving a significant glance at Ursule, and left the room.

His admonitions were wasted on Monsieur de la Roche; the quicksilver of his mental thermometer suddenly mounted to fever heat; and, at his daughter's side, his ecstacy found vent in all manner of fantastic extravagances; until Ursule, with the authority of an established nurse, interfered; and finally expelled him from the apartment, threatening not to open the door to him again that night, if he did not moderate his joyful demonstrations.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

A REMARKABLE DOG.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

In the fall of 1843 I made a journey from central New York down through the eastern part of Pennsylvania to the city of Philadelphia in a lumbering old stage-coach. To make matters as disagreeable as possible, it chanced that early one evening I was aroused from a sort of travelling doze by a sudden crash and jar, and the settling down of the front part of the vehicle. The fore axle-tree had broken close to the off wheel, and until it should be repaired we could not proceed any further.

"There's a small village back here about three miles," said the driver, "where I'm agoing to take the horses, and you can either come with me, or get lodgings at a farm-house close by."

As I was the only passenger, and very much fatigued with the ride, I preferred the nearest quarters; and getting the driver to assist me in removing my luggage thither, I asked entertainment of the farmer, who assented in a cordial manner; and in less than an hour I was seated at table, and doing ample justice to the good cheer before me.

The family of Mr. Mansfield—for such was the name of the worthy farmer—consisted of himself, wife, a pretty daughter of fourteen, and a large, English mastiff. I have included the dog, because his wonderful sagacity entitled him to a rank much higher than an ordinary beast.

Before I knew anything of the remarkable qualities of this animal, I was peculiarly attracted to him by a certain air of stately dignity combined with gentleness, and the almost human look of intelligence that beamed from his eyes. It seemed, when he looked at me steadily and heard me speak, as if he really knew what I said, and more than once I caught myself fancying that he was about to reply.

"That is a very fine dog you have, Mr. Mansfield," I casually remarked, as I drew back from the table and saw the eyes of the animal fixed so gently and comprehensively upon mine. "At what price do you value him?"

"His weight in diamonds could not purchase him, sir!" replied the farmer, with enthusiasm.

"Indeed!"

"No, sir; he is one of us—one of our family, I may say—and I would just as soon think of disposing of my wife, or my daughter Hattie there, as of selling him."

"There must be a very strong attachment between you then, certainly," I rejoined.

"Indeed there is—a bond of union that nothing but death can sever. A most extraordinary animal, sir, is Bruno; and to him I am, under God, indebted for the life of my darling child; only for him, sir, this would long since have been a house of mourning."

"You excite my curiosity; will you not favor me with the story?"

"Presently I will, sir. But first let me show you how much Bruno knows and understands. Where did you place the candlestick last night, when you went to bed, Hattie?"

"On the table, father."

"Is it there, now?"

"No; I brought it down in the morning."

"And the extinguisher?"

"I left that on the table."

"You may go and get it. Stay!" he continued, as she rose to obey; "you may not be able to find it in the dark, and Bruno can. Go and get it, Bruno."

The dog, who had been looking at us, and seemingly listening to the conversation, now quietly arose; and, going to a door which opened upon a stairway, he stretched himself upward, lifted the latch with one fore paw, pulled the door open with the other, and disappeared. In a few moments he returned, with the extinguisher in his mouth, which he carried straight to his master.

"Give it to Hattie," said the latter.

The dog at once advanced to the girl.

"I think mother wants it," laughed Hattie.

The dog immediately went to Mrs. Mansfield, who was busy drying some dishes and placing them upon a large, old-fashioned cupboard.

"Poor Bruno!" said his mistress, with a smile; "they are only trying you; but if you will go over to the fireplace, and take a seat till I am done, I will relieve you of your charge."

No human being could have shown a more ready comprehension of everything spoken in an ordinary tone than did that sagacious brute; and as he walked over with a stately step, and seated himself as directed, with the extinguisher still in his mouth, I involuntarily uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"I suppose you think this a very clever trick which he has been taught?" observed the farmer, turning to me with a triumphant smile; "but I assure you, upon my honor, I never asked him to do the same thing before."

Of course I was all amazement. What, save the power of speech, was the dividing line between this brute and the human species?

After trying him several times more, in different ways, and thus proving him to have a knowledge of all that was said to him, Mr. Mansfield proceeded to relate the following exciting and interesting incident:

"Six years ago last summer," began the worthy farmer, "on a dull, drizzly afternoon, I drove down to the village to get my horse shod, and being detained till near dark, Hattie was sent by her mother to fetch the cows from a distant pasture. There seemed to be sufficient daylight for the purpose when she set out; but night came on fast and almost suddenly, and when I got home Hattie had not yet returned. From the very moment of being told whither she had gone, I felt a strange uneasiness about the poor girl; for the night had then set in intensely dark, and her way lay over a rugged hill, through a patch of woods, and across the neck of a miry swamp, where I had made a safe foot-path, by sinking some logs in the treacherous ground, and constructing a rude bridge across a sluggish stream. But should either she or the cattle miss this bridge and get into the swamp, there was danger of their being mired and suffocated; and therefore it was with a good deal of nervous anxiety that myself and wife, lighted by a lantern, hurried over to the perilous spot, hoping to meet Hattie on the way.

"A fine, misty rain was steadily falling, and the clouds hung about the earth like a fog, so that it was impossible to see only a few feet with the aid of the light, and not an inch without it. Judging, from a careful inspection, that the cattle had not yet crossed the bridge, we went over to the pasture in search of them, calling Hattie loudly all the time. We found most of the animals at no great distance; but two were missing, and the poor child was not to be discovered. Then we became alarmed in earnest, and commenced a search for her, hurrying from one point to another, and shouting her name and hallooing continually. This we did for a couple of hours; and then my poor wife sat down and wrung her hands in despair. I suggested that Hattie might even then be at home and alarmed at our absence; and this inspired her mother with sufficient hope and strength to get there, where she sunk down under a new disappointment, helpless as a child.

"Ah, sir, that was a time of terrible trial to me—my sweet child lost, my wife utterly prostrated, and not another soul near to give me aid and sympathy. I could not stand it alone, and I at once hurried to the nearest neighbor. The man immediately set off to rouse other neighbors, and his family accompanied me home. By midnight quite a party had assembled at the house here; but it was decided not to begin the search for Hattie till the following morning.

"At daybreak seven of us went off in quest of the poor child, taking along a couple of dinner-horns, and some three or four rifles, in the hope of reaching her by sounds louder than our calls and shouts. We took the regular cow-path to the pasture, and searched the swamp thoroughly in the vicinity of the bridge. The pasture was hilly and much covered with trees and bushes, and we were several hours getting through with that; and then we spread off in different directions, and occupied the entire day without success. Oh, what a horrible night to me was that which followed!

"For four days we scoured the country in every direction, without getting any tidings of the poor child; and then all, even those who had been the most sanguine of finding her, gave her up as utterly lost; and completely worn out and heart-broken, I threw myself down, wishing for death to relieve me of my misery.

"It was on this evening that a younger brother, who had been away a couple of weeks on a journey up the country, returned with Bruno, who had been his sole travelling companion. The sight of the dog, whose sagacity had long been the wonder of all who knew him, excited a faint hope in my breast that he might yet find his young mistress, either living or dead; and with this idea uppermost in my mind, half insane as I was, I talked to him of the sad affair, just as if he were blessed with the understanding of a human being. Never shall I forget the sorrowful but singularly comprehensive expression of his brown eyes, as he kept them fixed upon mine all the while I was speaking to him; and when I had done, he turned away with a low, mournful whine, and suddenly disappeared.

"Early next morning my brother shouldered his rifle, and announced his intention of trying his fortune in a fresh search for the poor child; but all the men had gone home, and I was too much broken down with grief to accompany him; and so, calling for the dog, and not finding him, he set off alone.

"It was somewhere about the middle of the day that I was sitting by the bed of my nearly distracted wife, trying to soothe and console her as best I could, when suddenly Bruno, whom I had entirely forgotten meantime, came bounding into the room, looking soiled and fatigued, as if from a long journey, and at once began to bark and whine in a strange, peculiar manner, running to and fro between me and the door.

"'I do believe the dog has found the child!' exclaimed I, starting to my feet with a new hope.

"'Oh, God grant it!' cried my wife, wringing her hands.

"'Try and be calm, at least till I return,' said I, feeling a new life in all my veins.

"I hurried out, the dog preceding me and barking joyously. He then struck off in a direction different from any we had taken in our search for the girl, barking excitedly, looking back at every few steps, and thus seeming to urge me to follow him. This I did as fast as the nature of the ground would permit, running the most of the way. Into and through a deep, dense wood, down along a gloomy hollow, and up the steep sides of a wild, rocky mountain, the faithful dog led me to a distance of three miles, keeping just so far in advance, and always timing his gait to mine.

"At length we reached a spot more wild, rocky and gloomy than any I had yet seen; and climbing to the top of a sort of cliff, Bruno gave vent to a series of strange sounds, something between a bark, a howl and a wail, alternately looking back at me and down at some object evidently far below him. Pressing forward, with emotions that I have no language to describe, but which seemed to still the very beatings of my heart and rendered me sick and faint, I gained a footing beside the dog; and looking down into a sort of pit or basin, surrounded on all sides by precipitous rocks—a strange formation of nature indeed—I beheld my poor child, stretched out on the earth, motionless, and as I then believed, dead. My brain reeled at the sight, and it is a wonder I did not fall. Perhaps I did; for how I got down to her I never knew; but my next remembrance is of sitting on the earth, clasping the poor, bruised, starved creature in my arms, and thanking God with all my heart that I held a living, breathing child.

"I took off my coat, tore it into strips, lashed the child to my back, clambered up the rocks, and thus conveyed her home, fainting with fatigue and emotion just inside the doorway.

"That she eventually recovered, you have an evidence in her presence here to-night.

"In searching for the missing cows, she had lost her way; and becoming frightened, she had wandered off, she knew not whither, and had fallen over the rocks during the night, injuring herself so severely as to be unable to escape from the pit, where she had remained for five mortal days without a morsel of food. Only for this noble animal, her bones might have been bleeching there to this day, and myself and wife been crushed with the calamity that would have left us childless. By what strange instinct, reason, sagacity, or what you will, the dog had found her I am unable to say; but the fact *itself* would have been sufficient, had I ever been a doubter or skeptic, to have made me a firm believer in the watchful care and inscrutable ways of a Divine Providence. Do you wonder now, sir, that no money can purchase Bruno?"

The next morning, when the stage came along in good repair, and I took leave of the worthy farmer and his family, I held out my hand to the noble dog, who placed a paw in it, with dignified gravity, and gave me a parting look of intelligence that haunts me to this day, and which, were I an artist, I should long since have drawn upon canvas. Had that animal a mind and soul? Sometimes, when I compare him with the human brutes I meet almost daily, I am tempted to believe he had both, and that the latter have neither.

◆

"IF THEY HAD ONLY KISSED THAT LITTLE HAND."

We listened the other day to an eminent divine, one of America's most gifted and honored sons, as he gave some account of "The wrongs of his boyhood." "I went away to school," said he, "when I was seven years old. My teachers never understood me. My first teacher assumed that nothing was easier than to understand children. Hence he never took pains to study the character and understand the disposition of a child.

"'You have blotted your book, sir—how is that? Do you mean to disobey me? Have not I told you that I *would* have clean writing-books?' said my master.

"'I have *not* blotted my book,' said I, stoutly.

"'Who has blotted it, then? No one has had it but yourself. Do you accuse any one else?'

"'I do not accuse any one, and I have not blotted my book.'

"I spoke in good faith, though imprudently. I had no knowledge of having blotted my book.

"'Hold out your hand, and be punished for disobedience and lying.' I held out the hand that my mother had so often kissed. I was not yet eight years old. The master feruled me till he was tired, and I never shed a tear. My eye-balls seemed on fire. The teacher rested, and then whipped me again. I did not weep or cry out.

"'You shall beg to be let off, sir,' said he. I did not beg. I endured all he chose to inflict, and he was obliged to leave me at last, worn out with my obstinacy.

"'The worst boy that I ever saw,' said he. 'You will come to the gallows yet. You have not human feelings.'

"I looked at my swollen and discolored hand. Oh, if any one had kissed that little hand instead of beating it, I could have hid my face in his bosom, and wept for every fault I had committed or ever should commit. I believe I registered a vow in Heaven then, to be always kind to little children. [God knows he has kept it, most tenderly and religiously.] That master did his best, but he could make nothing of me. God forgive him, as I have, and may such teachers be 'like angel visits, few and far between.' A teacher with a great heart, and a wise head, who can know his or her pupils, and teach them, adapting instruction to capacity, is a treasure. I remember a fellow, who sat by me in the lecture room, who fell under grave rebuke, because the lecturer judged by appearances. He had a trick of whittling. One day he fashioned a small keel of a ship, a dainty thing, with a witching figure head. He finished it, just as the lecture was finished. Dr. M—— was a reverend man, with white hair, and a kind heart. But the good man was wounded by the whittler. He was idle, *and* disrespectful; and he summoned him to his study, to administer a wholesome rebuke.

"'Young man,' said he, 'I am obliged to speak to you about the foolish and trifling way in which you spend your time.'

"Frank W. looked at him in surprise.

"'Please take that thing out of your pocket that you made during lecture.'

"Frank drew forth the keel—he had made it, without thinking, and he was hardly conscious of its existence.

"'Your disrespect for me and the students, I might pass by,' said Dr. M——, 'but your irreverence for important subjects, I must treat more severely. Can you tell me the subject of the lecture this morning?'

"Frank told the subject readily.

"'Can you tell me *any* thing about the manner in which it was treated.'

"'Think so,' said Frank. And he began at the first remark of the lecturer, and repeated almost every word of the lecture.

"'I did not think you noticed anything that I said, Mr. W.,' said the Doctor, astonishment and respect struggling for the mastery of his mind.

"'I suppose I was whittling,' said Frank, 'I generally am, but I did not know it, upon my honor. I never was more interested in a lecture in my life.'

"'Appearances are deceitful," said the doctor. 'You will pardon me for judging you wrongfully.'

"'And I hope you will pardon me for my everlasting whittling,' said Frank. 'I would give it up, but I am afraid I should lose the thread of my ideas, if I had not something in my hands.'"

Narrow men are men of routine, and easily scandalized by any eccentricity, while genius is essentially eccentric, though eccentricity is by no means always a mark of genius.

◆

CONFRONT improper conduct, not by retaliation, but by example.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Do we forgive and pray
For those who, day by day,
Cast shadows on our way?

Does hatred form no part
Of our sad, wounded heart,
Aching with sorrow's smart?

And when our idols, all
Beloved and trusted, fall,
Shrouded in envy's pall;

When, like a fluttering bird,
Our spirit shall be stirred,
By some ungracious word;

Oh! can we pause and pray,
With child-like faith for they
Who make so dark our day?

Redeemer of mankind,
In thee, so good and kind,
A faithful friend we find.

Thou'lt grant us grace, and give
Us strength, that we may live,
May suffer, and forgive.

LOVE AND FEAR.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Did you hear me, sir?"

"I'm not deaf," muttered the boy in undertone, not meant for the ear of his father, but reaching it nevertheless.

Red anger burned instantly in the face of Mr. Somers; his eyes flashed with cruel purpose; his arm moved with an impulse to strike.

"Take care, sir!" Mr. Somers advanced towards the lad in a threatening way; but restrained the hand half raised for a blow.

"Off with you, this instant!" he said, in a passionate way; "and don't let the grass grow under your feet. If you're not back in thirty minutes by the watch, I'll flog you within an inch of your life."

And Mr. Somers drew out his watch to note the time; then turned from the boy, actually trembling with excitement.

Richard, that was the lad's name, manifested neither fear nor alacrity; but, instead, a kind of dogged impassiveness. He made no response, whatever. The stormy utterance of his father did not seem to affect him any more than if it had been the murmur of wind in the trees overhead. Rising from the ground, where he had been sitting, with a piece of wood in his hand, which he was modelling into the form of a boat, he moved away with a loitering step. Not a sign beyond this was there that he had heard, understood, or intended to obey his father.

"Thirty minutes!" muttered Richard, as he walked along, as leisurely as if he had the day before him. "He knows I can't go in thirty minutes without running every step of the way there and back; and I'm not going to do it for him or any body else. Let him flog me if he will. I won't stand it long."

Quick footsteps would have taken Richard to the end of his short journey to a neighbor's house and back, in less than twenty-five minutes; but anger had awakened anger, and harshly applied force a feeling of resistence.

"I'm not a dog to be kicked!" so he talked with himself, "or a mule to be driven. That's not the way to treat a boy. Flog me within an inch of my life! I wish he would kill me one of these days. Then he'd be——"

Richard could not utter the words that commenced forming on his tongue. A good impulse restrained him. He felt a little shocked at the wickedness of his thought. After this, he walked on more briskly, as if to atone by obedience for the evil desire cherished for a moment, in his heart. But his feet soon lingered again. There was no willing mind in the boy. Propulsion, not attraction, moved him onwards, and his was a nature prone to resist. On his way many attractive things presented themselves, and he stopped, here and there—sometimes in forgetfullness of his errand; sometimes in wilful disregard of his father's command—wasting the time and rendering punishment a thing next to certain.

Full thirty minutes had expired when the boy reached his destination.

"Won't you step down to the post office and mail this letter for me?—that's a good boy!" said the gentleman to whom he had been sent with a message. The request was made in such a kind voice, and with such a pleasant smile, that Richard felt that he could go through fire and water, as the saying is, to oblige him.

"Certainly, sir," he replied, in the most compliant manner, reaching out his hand for the letter. "I'll do it with the greatest pleasure."

"As well be killed for a sheep as a lamb," said the boy, as he took his way to the post office. "The half hour's up, and the flogging earned. He can only take the other inch of my life at the worst, and then there'll be an end of it."

And he tried to whistle up a state of complete indifference; but the notes he sent out upon the listening air were not light and thought-free, as the robin's warble, nor sweet and tender as the little yellow bird's song. The boy's mind was not at ease.

After depositing the letter, Richard sauntered away in a listless, indeterminate manner. Going home was not in his mind. There was an angry father there; and punishment awaited his return. He did not feel in the least inclined to meet the flogging within an inch of his life at an earlier moment than was absolutely necessary. A sight of the river which ran a short distance from the town, gave direction to his wavering thought; and off he started for the pleasant stream on whose bosom he loved to glide, bending to the light springing oar.

"You don't expect to see him in half an hour, of course," said a gentleman who had been witness to the contest between the boy and his father, and who had not failed to notice the excited and baffled state of Mr. Somers's mind. Age, character, or relation, gave him warrant for this free speech. It was not received as an intrusion, but in some deference of manner.

"He knows the penalty." Mr. Somers knit his brows severely. Cruel purpose drew his lips firmly together.

"Which you mean to inflict?"

"As surely as there is strength in this right arm!" And he stretched out the vigorous member.

"Even to within an inch of the boy's life?" A pair of calm eyes looked into the face of the angry father; a mild, rebuking voice was in his ears.

"I will bend or break him, sir. That is my duty. What hope is there for a wilfully disobedient child?"

"Small hope, I fear," said the other.

"Then is not my duty plain?"

"There is no question as to your duty, in the abstract, being plain—the duty of securing submission from your child—but it is barely possible that you are not using the right means. Mrs. Howitt has expressed beautifully, in a single line, a truth that may help you to see some better way to reach the case. Do you remember it?"

Mr. Somers shook his head.

"For love hath readier will than fear."

"Love!" There was a spirit of rejection in the voice of Mr. Somers.

"We need not be unkind, austere,
For love hath readier will than fear."

The neighbor repeated the couplet in a low, emphatic voice, his tones lingering on the words that needed expression, so as to bring out the full meaning they had power to convey. The eyes of Mr. Somers fell away from his face. He showed a slight uneasiness of manner. His stern countenance relaxed something of its sternness.

"A homelier, but more strongly expressed form of the same sentiment is given in the old proverb, made when language went to its meaning by the shortest way. 'Honey catches more flies than vinegar.' Now, friend Somers, having tried the vinegar for a good while, and with most discouraging results, let me suggest your resort to honey. In other words, change your whole mode of discipline. Speak kindly, and in a low, firm voice to Richard, instead of in the bluff, imperative, querulous, or angry manner in which you almost always address him. Let him feel that you really love him; that there is a soft, warm, attachable side to your character, and my word for it, he will move to your bidding with winged feet. I have studied the boy, and see in him good and noble qualities. But he has inherited from his father a certain impatience of control, and a will ever on the alert to resist unduly applied force. You may lead him, by love, anywhere; but, under the rule of fear, you will drive him, certainly, beyond your influence. Forgive my plain speech. I have wished to say this before, but, until now, saw no good opportunity."

The whole aspect of Mr. Somers underwent a change. Conviction struck to his heart. He saw that he had been unjust to the boy, unloving, unkind. Back to his own early days his thought went with a bound, and there came vivid remembrances of states into which he had been thrown by harsh treatment, states from which no punishment, however severe, could move him. Kindness had always been to his heart like melting sunshine; sternness like an icy wind. And Richard was like him. How strange that he had never thought of this before!

A long sigh quivered up from the oppressed heart of Mr. Somers.

"If I could only think so," he said. "But the obstinate self-will of the boy is so firmly inrooted."

"That you can never tear it up by force," spoke out the friend. "The only way is to weaken its vital currents, to cut off the flow of life, and let it wither for lack of sustenance, and die."

"Perhaps you are right," said Mr. Somers, in a troubled, uneasy way. "But what am I to do now? I gave him half an hour in which to do an errand; laid my commands on him, and enforced them by threats of punishment. Is my word to go for nought? Shall a boy defy me?"

A flash of anger gleamed over the father's face.

"Gently, patiently, forgivingly deal with the offender," replied the neighbor, as he laid his hand on the arm of Mr. Somers. "Let love rule, not anger. Is he all to blame? No. Does not the origin of the wrong lie most with yourself? Has it not grown out of your unwise discipline? Begin correction at the source. First get in a right attitude yourself, and then bring him right. As you provoked disobedience in the present case, restrain the punishing arm."

"But I shall forfeit my word."

"You will do that even if you punish."

"How so?"

"You will hardly go to within an inch of the boy's life. You were angry, and went beyond yourself. Take counsel of reason, now. Passion and pride are blind impulses, and sure to lead us from the right path. Think away from your present unhappy relation to the unhappy boy, and let love for him prompt you to seek only his good. He is afar off from you now; draw him near, even within the circle of tenderly embracing arms. That is *your* duty, my friend. Enter into it, and all will be well."

The neighbor, after saying this, retired, leaving Mr. Somers to the companionship of his own thoughts. There was now a weight of concern on the father's heart. Anger had given place to a troubled feeling. He drew out his watch as the half-hour period advanced to a close, looked at the time, and then from the window, anxiously. If Richard had appeared in the distance, what a sense of relief it would have produced. But there was no sign of the returning boy.

"Wilfully disobedient! Defiant!" The indignant man said this, as hot blood began to burn in his face. "Perverse, unhappy, wrongly-governed boy!" This was the father, speaking in reply, and struggling to hold anger in check.

The half hour expired. Richard was still away. Another half hour elapsed, and yet he was absent.

"He shall be punished for this!" said Mr. Somers, as indignation gained the mastery. Then a remembrance of the wise words spoken by his neighbor, pressed back the tide of indignation; and he let pity move over the troubled surface of his feelings and calm them like oil.

A whole hour beyond the limit of time had passed. Mr. Somers was growing uneasy. It flashed across his mind that Richard, in a fit of anger, rebellion and discouragement, might have been tempted to run off. He remembered very distinctly, how, once, in his boyish troubles at home, he had meditated the same thing; and actually commenced preparations to abandon father and mother and try his fortunes in the world.

At the end of the second hour Mr. Somers was in a very anxious state; and he was about making preparation to go out in search of Richard, when, on glancing from the window, he saw him pass in a hurried, stealthy way. He stood, listening to hear him enter. The door opened, silently. Tip-toe steps sounded faintly along the passage. Mr. Somers followed them with his ears, but lost them on the stairs.

"What shall I do?" That was the difficult question for Mr. Somers. He stood for several minutes, trying to get his thoughts clear and his feelings calm. Thus far, his harsh methods had proved wholly fruitless. Threats and punishments wrought no salutory reforms; the boy grew worse, instead of better. Why this was so, clearer perception now told him.

"Poor boy!" he said with a sigh: and this very utterance of a sentiment of pity helped him to a more pitying state of mind. An image of fear and suffering, instead of hard defiance and reckless disobedience, took distinct form in his thoughts.

"Now is the time to reach him with gentleness and love." As Mr. Somers thus spoke with himself, he opened the door and went out into the passage.

"Did you see Richard?" he asked, speaking to a domestic who happened to be there at the moment.

"No sir," she replied.

"I thought he came in just now."

"I did not notice him, sir."

Mr. Somers went to the foot of the stairway and called—

"Richard!" Not harshly, but kindly.

No answer came.

"Richard!" His voice went up louder, through the stairways and passages. But no sound, save echo, was returned.

"I am certain he came in."

"It might have been some one else," suggested the domestic. "I havn't seen anything of him for two or three hours."

Mr. Somers went up stairs to the lad's room. The door was shut. He opened it and went in. Richard was lying on the bed. He did not stir, but lay crouching and motionless like one exhausted by pain. His face was of an ashen hue. Mr. Somers noticed an expression of fear to sweep over it, as the boys large, strangely bright eyes turned upon him. As he advanced across the room, the fear and shrinking changed to something like the anguish of terror.

"O father!" he said, imploringly, "don't!—don't do it now!" and he lifted one arm as if to protect himself.

Mr. Somers understood him. The appeal and movement touched his feelings deeply.

"What ails you, my son?" The father's voice was low, pitying and full of tenderness.

Instantly the lines of fear died out of the boy's face. His lips quivered—tears came brimming to his eyes.

"My arm's broke!" he sobbed; and then the tears fell raining over his cheeks.

"O, Richard!" ejaculated Mr. Somers, as he placed his hand softly on the boy's forehead. "How did this happen?"

"I couldn't get back in half an hour, father, without running all the way; and I felt ugly here"—laying his hand on his breast—"and didn't try to go quickly. I went over the river, because I was afraid to come home; and fell from a pile of boards."

"Have you seen a doctor?" Mr. Somers enquired, anxiously.

"Yes sir. They took me to the doctor's and he set my arm."

Mr. Somers bent over his child, with his hand tenderly pressed on his forehead for some moments, in silence; then, as his full heart overran in a current of emotion, he stooped and kissed him, murmuring:

"My poor boy!"

Richard did not understand all his father meant by the exclamation; but he felt that pity, forgiveness, and love were in his heart; and these were more to him than his sufferings, for, in their warmth and consolation, he forgot his pain.

"O father!" he said, a light falling on his pale countenance—"love me and I'll be good!"

Oh, the power of love! Anger, rebuke, remonstrance, punishment—these are but elements of weakness in comparison. How like a sharp thrust from the sword of conviction was this cry for love, sent up to Mr. Somers from the heart of his wayward, self-willed, stubbornly, resistant and defiant son.

"Richard." It was a month from the day on which the arm had been broken. "Richard, I want you to go down to Mr. Baird's for me right quickly."

The father spoke kindly, yet in a firm voice. Richard, who was reading, shut his book instantly, and coming to his father's side, with a cheerful—"Yes sir!"—stood looking at him, awaiting his message.

"Take this note to Mr. Baird and bring me an answer."

"Yes sir." And Richard took the note, and turning from his father, left his office with light and willing footsteps.

"Love hath readier will than fear!"

"Ah, good morning!" said Mr. Somers, turning at the sound of a well known voice, and smiling a pleasant welcome.

"I see you have found the better way," remarked the neighbor.

"Yes, thanks to your timely uttered admonition," was replied. "The better and the easier way. A harsh word seems to make leaden that boy's feet; while a kind word gives them the wind's lightness."

"If parents would only take this to heart," said the neighbor, "what a change would pass over thousands and thousands of troubled homes in our land! How easy would the government of children become! Love moves by a sweet transfusion of itself, electrically; but anger, sternness, and appeals to fear, rule only by the law governing where force is opposed to force. The stronger subdues the weaker, and there follows perpetual reactions, rebellions and discord."

A TRUE WIFE.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN

When Edward Farnham and Fanny Holcomb got married and "went out west," Fanny's aunt, Sarah Camp, declared that they were "a couple of babies, and would soon have to be brought home to be nursed." Grandma and grandpa Camp shared their maiden daughter's fears, but not her spite, and hoped for the best.

The young people had commenced life at the very foot of the ladder, and they were not ashamed to conform in all things to their narrow circumstances. They must walk in the dust of the road travelled by many weary feet, now, but above them were the broad, free spaces of serene air, and cloudless sunlight, and thither they would be ever tending.

Something of this, in plain and few words, Edward Farnham embodied in his letter to Mr. Camp. The interest of Fanny's little fortune was all she could rightly claim until of age to control all—that, of course, they would gladly receive, but anything in the shape of aid, any sacrifice of the modest comforts of the dear old home neither of them would even hear of accepting. They were young and strong, and willing to work industriously and fare plainly until fortune smiled upon them, as she would sooner or later. And so, with many thanks, and a thousand loving questions and messages, the letter closed.

"We were mistaken, Sarah," grandpa Camp said, as he finished reading it and laid it upon the table with his spectacles atop; "both of us mistaken, as folks often are in pronouncing sudden judgments. Edward and Fanny are realities in this age of humbug. Edward's going to work, and he's got a helpmate, and I look upon his fortune as bein' as good as made. You'll see if I aint right, and one of these years, when the poor old father and mother have lain down beside Fanny's mother in the churchyard, you'll make your home with them, and it'll be a right good, substantial, and handsome home, too, that they'll make you welcome to."

The old man's prophecy was fulfilled, but years had passed, and each had brought its trials and its struggles, its days of toil, its disappointments, as well as the golden fruitions of steady industry, and unremitting care.

Fanny had no thought of being idle while Edward worked. He would have gone to the very extent of his salary, and perhaps, in his anxiety, beyond it, to save her fatigue, and care, to place and keep her in a position of proximate comfort to that which she had enjoyed at home. But here Fanny's own good sense stepped in to prevent an act of almost suicidal folly.

"We know just what we have to live on, Edward, and we must not go beyond that. Let us make our expenses within, rather than quite up to our means, and then we shall not only contract no debts, but any extraordinary expenditures, as of sickness, will not embarrass us. Above all, let us be independent, now, and when my little fund comes in, you will be ready, perhaps, to start business on your own account, or will have learned enough of the West to know how to invest it to the best advantage."

Fanny was more right than she knew, and Edward saw the time when he was far more willing to acknowledge it than he was when first they debated their plans. Steadily he worked on. He was only a clerk, with a salary that, to a "fast" young man would scarcely have ensured *quantum sufficit* of wine and cigars. Yet he and Fanny continued to live upon it, and to lay by something, after purchasing clothing from her little fund of interest money. They saw the wisdom of their course, when the first babe was born and the attendant expenses of Fanny's illness. And the waste and extravagance of the raw girl who reigned in the kitchen during the time, quite exhausted all they had been able to save.

Again they saw this, and Edward blessed the wise forethought of his wife, when, only a few months before she attained the age which was to give her control of her money, the bank in which it was invested failed, and her little fortune was involved in the wreck.

They were now dependent on Edward's salary alone, but fortunately and justly it had been raised, as his industry and energy had been so apparent to his employers as to cause them gladly to add to the sum, that they could not but feel an inadequate compensation for such services.

About this time Fanny sat down to write to her Aunt Sarah; a little tearful, a little tremulous, but firmly resolved to execute her purpose, which was to decline a visit from her aunt, who had offered to come, a second time, to watch over her dear child in her hour of peril.

"I have an excellent woman already here," she wrote, "who will be housekeeper, nurse, and maid of all work. Don't fear that I shall not have good care. I shall do very well; Edward is so kind, and little Sarah is not in the least troublesome. I must not take you from home, when my grandparents need you so much, and besides, to tell the whole truth, we cannot afford the expense of another inmate. I know what you would say to this confession, but we *must* be independent. We will neither incur debts, nor obligations in money matters."

Six years have passed since Fanny made this sacrifice to her sense of right—for it was a sacrifice, as any woman knows. She has made many since; but none, I think, that have gone so hard with her. But each year has seen some gain, some less need of the extreme watchfulness over minor expenses. And a wise economy has never been allowed to merge into miserly habits. In the days of their extremest poverty, the poor never went unfed or unaided from Edward Farnham's door.

Each year Fanny had some good tidings to communicate to the dear ones at home. Now it was that Edward had made a step in his employment with an increase of salary; now a judicious investment of the aggregate of many little savings had swelled the sum that was, by and by, to establish him in business; now he had a prospect of partnership, sooner or later, in the firm he had so long served.

Last year Fanny went from her home, on a visit of several weeks in a distant part of the State. While absent she received a letter from her husband, begging her to return, on a certain day, as it seemed likely that they would be obliged to remove from the house they were then occupying. The letter was brief and somewhat unsatisfactory, but Fanny, like a good wife, stifled her anxiety and obeyed her husband's summons.

Edward met her at the depot with a carriage, and proposed to drive round and look at some houses, before going home. The carriage entered a quiet, pleasant street.

"Here is a house, which a friend of mine has lately purchased, I should like to have you see it," Edward said, as they stopped in front of a neat, roomy cottage, standing in the midst of a large, handsome garden; and putting aside her fears of intrusion, he lifted her from the carriage, followed by the children, and went up the garden walk.

Entering, without ceremony, he led her from room to room, enjoying her heartfelt praises of the furniture and decorations, the pleasant apartments, the many conveniences, with which the house abounded. Parlors, halls and sleeping-apartments had been examined, and then they passed toward that part of the house which contained kitchen and offices. Pausing in a pretty, matted passage, Edward threw open a door, and discovered a dining-room, with an abundant mid-day meal smoking upon the table. To Fanny's surprise, her own faithful domestic approached her with smiles of welcome, at the same time that her husband gravely requested her to lay aside her bonnet and take her place at table. Smiling at her bewilderment, he proceeded to divest her of her wraps, then led her to the head of the table, where, with a kiss, he seated her and welcomed her to her new home.

'Our home, my love, our very own, I assure you," he said, when the first tumult of surprise was over, and the viands were being discussed with tolerable calmness. "Changes have occurred since you left me. I am clerk no longer, but partner in the firm, with a large share in the profits, considering that I had no capital of consequence aside from my business habits. Mr. Page advised me to buy this property at the very time he offered the partnership; it was very low, and likely to rise in case we want to sell again. Mr. Page and his partner furnished the house, as a token of their appreciation of my services in detecting that swindling concern last winter, by which I saved them thirty thousand dollars. It is all ours, secured in your name. With life and health, my fortune is secure now, and we shall enjoy here the fruits of all our toils and sacrifices."

That very evening the doors of the cottage were thrown open, and the friends of Edward and Fanny flocked in, to give them welcome home. Mrs. Page had planned and prepared this housewarming, and her gift was the handsome dress, whose glossy folds falling round Fanny's slender form, gleamed with changing opaline tints, while on her neck and arms shone in soft lustre the pearls that had decked her mother on her bridal eve, never before worn by her child.

Edward and Fanny stood upon the porch, and watched the departure of the last lingering guest. As his footsteps died away, the husband turned and clasped the dear partner of his life to his heart.

"For wedded joys, for all soothing and encouragement, for principles confirmed, for industry stimulated, for a wife's and children's love, for happy prospects and assured successes, for a home of peace and beauty, I thank thee, oh dearest one; and for all these blessings, chiefest for giving me thee, I thank the Father of all mercies."

And so, with arms entwined and hearts full of joy and reverent gratitude, they turned within, and sought the peaceful slumbers that await all loving, trustful workers in reaping the rewards of toil.

KNOWLEDGE is the consequence of time, and multitude of days are fittest to teach wisdom.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

TURN a man away from one question that he conceives it his right to examine, and you embarrass all the workings of his whole intellectual constitution. Place him in a house and debar him from but one apartment in it, and you tell him in vain that he is free to all the others. It is a Bluebeard mansion to him; the door of the forbidden chamber haunts him wherever he treads.

MULTITUDES, like monarchs, will not always bear the truth; and multitudes, like monarchs, will seldom hear it. Both monarchs and multitudes delight in adulation; and, as this is not what they receive from sincere friends, they rarely have sincere friends.

SOME people care little for curious objects. If they had the apple that Eve tasted in Eden, the apple that revealed to Newton the law of gravitation, and the apple that Tell shot from his son's head, they would give them to the cooks to make dumplings.

THE types are the men-of-arms of the world's later and greatest generals, and when they receive the leader's command, their columns make the world's heart tremble with enthusiasm and beat time to their marches.

A MAN'S want of conversation generally arises from his supposing that his mind is like Fortunatus's purse, and will always furnish him without his putting anything into it.

AFFECT not the society of your inferiors, nor court that of the great. The first will consider you a restraint upon them, and the last as an intruder, or *upon sufferance*.

WE don't want men that will change, like the vanes of our steeples, with the course of the wind, but men who, like mountains, will change the course of the wind.

THOSE who lack a good, natural character may be sure they cannot long sustain, without detection, an artificial one.

A MOST ridiculous habit among some young people is the cultivation of melancholy as an interesting accomplishment.

TEARS are the magic blossoms of the heart at parting, smiles at meeting. Sometimes they bloom at once; then joy is sorrow, and sorrow is joy.

IT is dangerous for one to climb his family-tree too high, for he is very apt to get among dead and decayed branches.

MEN look at the faults of others with a telescope—at their own with the same instrument reversed, or not at all.

A MINORITY in the right, associated by convictions of right, are sure in the end to triumph. They are so many missionaries of truth.

HE who freely praises what he wants to purchase, and he who enumerates the follies of what he means to sell, may set up a partnership with Honesty.

A MEDICAL writer institutes the inquiry whether single or married women live longest. Wives are not apt to last long unless they are well husbanded.

THE rich are naturally proud. They know that if they are not men of genius, they can buy those who are.

IT is a less misfortune to be born with a club foot, a hare-lip and a hump back than with a cross and envious disposition.

A FISH caught by the angler, and a boy tossed by a bull, must dislike the idea of one individual's rising in the world upon another's hook.

A MAN often expresses the same idea by wagging his head that a dog does by wagging his tail.

A YOUNG man, like a gun, is not likely to do any execution unless he has some fire in his prime.

A GRANITE rock is but an unsubstantial thing in comparison with a solid thought.

POETS are singers in God's earthly choir, whose organ is nature.

A MAN afraid of fire-arms, if he gets in liquor, is apt to imagine everything he sees a *revolver*.

GOOD is always a seed whose blossom is beauty.

YOU had better learn to conquer your own will than strive to obtain the mastery of that of others.

OF all earthly music, that which reaches the farthest into heaven is the beating of a loving heart.

THERE is no such thing as an easy chair for a discontented man.

TRADESMEN often lose their custom as field-sportsmen do their fingers—by high charges.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A PASSENGER on the cars was lately robbed at Springfield, Ill., of one hundred and seventy-five dollars, by a woman who snatched it from his hand, but handed it back after bothering him awhile, without his suspecting that she had taken anything from it, as she said she "was only in fun;" and when he discovered his loss, the playful creature was nowhere to be found.

A CALIFORNIA paper states that an old curmudgeon living near Marysville is in the habit of hanging his children till they grow black in the face, whenever they do anything to displease him, except when a tub of water happens to be handier than a rope, in which case he holds the head of the young offenders beneath the water until they struggle in the agonies of drowning.

A FLATBOATMAN on the Mississippi, who is spoken of as being "irresistibly fond of a practical joke," threw a red hot poker into the bunk in which his children (four in number) were sleeping, "just to see what a stampede there would be among 'em when their skins began to fry." One of the poor little things, a bright boy seven years of age, was shockingly burnt.

A LADY living in Newark, who had her husband arrested for crimes against herself and the community, was so incensed at his conduct, that, as he was passing out of the door of her residence, she attempted to bury a hatchet in his head, and was only prevented from doing so by the vigilance of the officer who had the delinquent husband in charge.

A YOUNG girl who was committed to the Tombs, in Boston, one night recently, was found, in the morning, hanging in her scarf; but though she was strangled to unconsciousness, animation was restored, and she was, after a while, placed beyond danger, so far as her attempt at suicide was concerned.

A FOOLISH girl, sixteen years of age, recently eloped with an old man, from a village in Massachusetts; her parents sent a sheriff to bring her back, who found her concealed between two feather beds in a hotel in a neighboring city, while the old lover paced up and down in the hall outside.

A NIGHT-WATCHMAN in Cohoes, one night recently, discovered a couple of men trying to set fire to a wheelright establishment, and attempted to arrest them, whereupon they fled. The watchman gave chase, and caught up with one of the fugitives, who stabbed him severely, and both of the villains escaped.

A GENTLEMAN was attacked in Richmond, Va., one night recently, by three thieves, one of whom knocked him down with a bludgeon, another held a towel saturated with chloroform over his face, while the third robbed him of $1,500, but fortunately overlooked $4,000 which the gentleman had in another pocket.

A PARTY of Indians deliberately cut an old chief's throat, near San Joaquin, a short time ago, because he had reached the age of one hundred years, it being a notion of theirs that nobody has a right to live beyond that age.

A COUPLE of boys in Orange county, each about fourteen years old, having got into a dispute, one of them drew a knife, and stabbed the other so severely that it was supposed he could not live.

As a Danish schooner was crossing Tynemouth bar, England, a short time since, a heavy sea carried away the wheelhouse, and crushing the captain against the skylight, killed him almost instantly.

A MAN living near Wilkesbarre, Pa., lately shot his son in the back, because the boy did not run fast enough to please the old brute, who had sent him on an errand. The wound inflicted proved to be mortal.

A LADY, sixty years of age, residing in Allegheny county, in this State, was recently frozen to death as she was going home on foot from a friend's house, four miles from her residence, whither she had been on a visit.

A YOUNG lady living at South Bend, Ind., hanged herself in her father's cellar one Sunday, recently. No cause for the terrible act was known.

A MIDDLE-AGED man in California, a short time since, eloped with and married a child only twelve years of age.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1861.

The Cause of the Enormous and Unparalleled Circulation of the Ledger.—We pay more money for contributions by popular and eminent writers, in order to make a great and good paper, than is paid by any ten other literary papers in the country; and, as a legitimate result, our circulation is larger than the combined circulation of any ten others.

We always stop the Ledger at the expiration of the year, or the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue, it it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

No Travelling Agents.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends to act as such you can put him down as a swindler.

We cannot change the address of a subscriber, unless he gives us his *former*, as well as his present address.

Rejected Manuscripts.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

Our Only Terms.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies. $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper. The notes of all specie-paying banks taken at par. When a draft or check can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. ☞ We employ no travelling agents.

GET MONEY.

A good deal of cant is written and spoken respecting the zeal of mankind to make money. It is also stated very often, and accepted as a self-evident truth, that we, the people of the United States, are more devoted to money-making than any other people in the world. Very well; suppose we are. It is only another way of saying that we surpass the rest of mankind in the virtues of energy and industry. We hold it to be the duty, as it is the instinct, of every man to make all the money he honestly can, and to save all the money he can properly afford to save.

The birds build their nests of sticks and straw, with much toil and instinctive skill. Every creature must have its nest, its lair, its den, and all creatures are endowed with the instinct and the ability to make just the kind of abode that is suited to them. The nest-constructing instinct is given to man also, and all of us, as soon as we are prepared to leave the parental nest, begin to think of getting one for ourselves. But man, being the most ingenious and capacious of all animals, craves a residence fitted to his greatness and his dignity. Man's nest is a brown-stone house, three or four stories high, elegantly furnished, provided with all the requisites of decency and labor-saving convenience; or, it is a large, commodious farm-house, with a hundred acres of land adjoining. In the present imperfect state of the arts and of social science, all men cannot have such nests as these; but all well-developed and healthy-minded men and women *want* such, feel they could adorn such, know that such would enhance their happiness. To try for such a nest is natural, right, and praiseworthy.

All the honest industry of man is directed to three objects, namely: getting a nest, improving the nest, and keeping the nest safe for old age. Who shall presume to call in question an instinct fixed in the nature of man by his Creator?

Wealth is said to corrupt our species. We do not believe it. Wealth is one of the great civilizers of man. Wealth corrupts when it is suddenly got, or unjustly distributed; when, owing to monopolies or entails, or some other barbarous system, it is prevented from diffusing itself naturally and justly. Two or three over-rich families in a community of poverty-stricken wretches—*that* is indeed most corrupting; it corrupts equally those who have wealth and those who have it not. But where all have an equal chance; where all start nearly even; where all have a certain degree of instruction to begin with; where superior skill and virtue alone give one man an advantage over another, there wealth is an unmixed blessing. In such communities, (and there are many such in these States,) nearly every man has an abode suitable to his character, and that abode is safe.

We ought to rejoice that the desire of wealth is so universal and so strong. It keeps the vast machinery of the world going. It has suggested the most beneficent enterprises and the most useful improvements. We owe to it the dramas of Shakspeare, the steam engine of Watt, Fulton's steamboat, and nearly every other great and good thing that we possess. We owe to it the fact, that a man who can earn one dollar a day can be better lodged, better fed, better clothed, better taught, than kings and nobles could five hundred years ago.

Sir Walter Scott truly says, that saving, not getting, is the mother of riches. This winter has taught many a young fellow what a capital thing it is to have a hundred dollars in the Saving's Bank. A hundred dollars is wealth to a young journeyman or clerk. He who has such a sum is a man; he who has no provision for the future is a serf: he must submit or starve. And everything that may be said of the advantages of a young man's possessing that hundred dollars, applies with equal force to his employer's thousands; nay, with greater force, for on the right use, and safe possession, and proper increase of those thousands, depends the livelihood of many families.

Our advice to a young man entering life would be this: Preserve your integrity and self-respect, though you live all your life in a hovel. Next to that: make money and save it, for with money comes independence; with money men build their nests and keep them safe. And he who has a nice, warm, pleasant nest can get a pretty bird to share it with him; and that converts a pile of brick and mortar into a home; and a happy home is the only earthly thing worth living for; as well as the best preparation for another and a better.

CALIFORNIA—A SIGN OF PROGRESS.

We heartily congratulate our friends in California upon the still increasing prosperity of their State. California is taking deep root. The slight falling off in the export of gold is a sign of progress, for it shows that they can now afford to *keep* a larger proportion of their gold than formerly. The product of gold, during the year 1860, is at least as great as in any previous year, and the State still sends away more than eight hundred thousand dollars' worth a month. The steamers from Panama landed at San Francisco last year the remarkable number of thirty thousand seven hundred passengers, and took away only fourteen thousand one hundred; while fifty thousand persons made their way to the golden land across the plains. The most startling evidence of prosperity, however, is the rapid increase in the export of commodities other than gold. In 1858, California exported less than half a million dollars' worth of such commodities; in 1859, the sum total ran up to five and a half millions; last year, the amount swelled to eight millions and three quarters. These exports are mostly the productions of the soil, the forest and the sea, such as grain, bread, wool, tallow, fish, furs, lumber, hides, potatoes, silver and quicksilver. Think of California exporting, in a single year, nearly two million dollars' worth of wheat. The wine culture, we observe, is increasing on the Pacific; the Californians exported thirty thousand dollars' worth last year. Several important branches of manufactures, we understand, are flourishing, and, we presume, will soon obviate the necessity of importing the most essential articles. The great want of California, it seems, is women—not fine ladies, but *women*, strong-armed, full-chested, and able and willing to work.

ARTIFICIAL WOMEN.

The manufacturers of female lay-figures have arrived at such a degree of skill in imparting a *semblance of life and humanity* to their artificial women, that unsophisticated persons sometimes mistake them for "living realities." An amusing instance of this kind recently occurred in this city. An ambitious young man from the interior, became so enamored of a fashionably-dressed figure turning a labor-saving machine in a Broadway window, that he daily paid his *devoirs* to it from the sidewalk. Being afraid that everybody would discover his secret, and fearful also that his attention might give offence to the object of his devotions, he kept as far from the window as the width of the pavement would allow, from which reason he was of course the more easily imposed upon. Day after day "he fed his passion;" until, being, as he said, unable longer to restrain himself and live, he opened his heart to a city acquaintance, expressing the greatest admiration for "the industrious gal who is always at her work, early and late, and never even goes home to dinner. I had no idee," he said, "that such a handsome city gal *could* work like that. She'll be just the wife to help me on the farm; and besides, *when it comes* to parties, and fixing up nice, and things, *won't* she take the shine off of all the women in our parts? *I* say she will." His friend humored the idea, and the next day, according to promise, introduced him to the proprietor of the "industrious gal." That gentleman, having been prepared for the occasion, received the lover cordially, and told him if he would call in the evening, after business hours, when the young lady would be through with her daily task, he would introduce him to her, and "give him every facility," etc. As soon as the shutters were closed, the ardent wooer was on hand, and found a large circle (composed of the employees of the establishment and their friends who had been let into the secret) ready to congratulate him. We draw a veil over the poor fellow's disappointment and mortification when he discovered the truth, and found (as too many honest-hearted men had done before him) that he had been worshipping a sham. The spectators, however, were not so tender of his feelings. They laughed at and quizzed him relentlessly, until their victim, goaded to desperation, turned upon the ladies present, and shaking his fist at them, exclaimed: "You aint any of you equal to *her*, anyhow, in all the p'ints that adorn her sex," and rushed from the store. This sally drew forth shouts of applause from the gentlemen, the memory of which may have somewhat comforted the disappointed swain, as he rode from the city the next morning in the earliest train.

SCOLDING.

If laughter begets fat, it is no less true that scolding is the parent of meagerness. Who ever saw a plump termagant? The virago is scraggy—scragginess is the badge of all her tribe. It would seem that the attrition of a fierce, exacting temper gives sharpness to the human frame as inevitably as a gritty grindstone puts a wiry edge on a broad ax. Artists understand this fact, and govern themselves accordingly. They invariably represent ladies supposed to be given to "the rampage" as remarkably high in bone. Shrews are thus depicted in comic valentines, and all the illustrators of "Curtain Lectures" have presented the "rib" of Mr. Caudle without a particle of fat. Lavater, referring to female firebrands, says flatly to their faces, that their noses are sharp. We have a dim idea that he mentions some exceptional cases of ladies with snub noses, who are given to snubbing their husbands, but these form a mild variety, and only a small proportion of the genus scold.

Seeing, therefore, that ill-temper and discontent are inconsistent with the "line of beauty," and that a sharp tongue and a sharp figure are one and inseparable, we would respectfully recommend all ladies of irascible disposition to curb and subdue the same for their beauty's sake. Natural history will afford them some pertinent hints on the subject. The meek and quiet domestic fowl hath a round bust, and is a shapely bird, pleasant to look upon, as she goes clucking cheerfully about the homestead; but the screaming jay, a foul-mouthed creature, always at feud with its feathered neighbors, is lean of body, sharp of beak, and in all respects a nuisance.

THE "ELDEST CHILD."

The eldest child of a family holds a position, as it regards influence and importance, scarcely second to that of the parents themselves. Often called upon, in the temporary absence of the father and mother, to direct home affairs—always looked up to as an oracle in matters of taste and opinion, by the junior members, who draw inferences and shape conclusions even without the help of spoken words, even from so slight tokens as a raised eyebrow or shrugged shoulder, or impatient gesture. Do elder brothers and sisters think enough of this? In after life they may, alas! but too sorrowfully, when they find themselves repeated in myriad forms of thought and expression, by those who then hung unnoticed upon their lips. Perhaps this brief hint may reach an eye hitherto careless of these "little things," which, like drops of water, go to swell such a mighty flood. "*Little*" things! we had almost said *nothing* is "little" in this world, least of all, those which we short-sighted mortals oftenest call such.

OUR DREAMS.

Nothing seems to us more mysterious than dreams. How strange our last waking thought, following us through the night, interwoven with subjects and persons which for years may not have disturbed our *waking* consciousness, in fact, perhaps *never*. And so the motley tissue is woven, and we wake and know nothing of it. Weeks or months after, maybe, some thread of association—some chance lever of thought shall pry up this big sepulchral stone, and from under it shall creep, one by one, a strange brood, winking and blinking at us, as if to say, How do I look by sunlight? Stranger than all—how vividly pass before our sealed lids the dear *dead* faces! Lips fresh and dewy, eyes lustrous with love, and the very aroma of the flowing tresses transfusing our whole being. Alas for the bitter waking from such visions when the heart is desolate, and no sympathizing voice whispers in the ear—"Alas for thee, my sister, my brother!"

PLEASURES OF AUTHORSHIP.

How few persons who read a book ever think of the labor necessary to produce it. The amount of thinking and planning, before pen touches paper;—the most felicitous key-note for the commencement;—that found, the hours upon hours, in which bending over the MS., sometimes in joy, sometimes in sadness, sometimes in weariness, page after page grows under the aching fingers, till finis is added. Then—the reading over for erasions, interlineations, and additions; then the moment when it passes from your reluctant, yet willing hands, into those of the publishers and printers. Then—oh horror! the purgatorial proofs, and crucifying punctuation; concerning which last, I will maintain every author's independent right to do as he or she pleases, spite of all arbitrary "rules." Pencil in hand, with glaring eyes you pounce upon every syllable, lest some typographical error escape you for the eyes of him whose most pious ejaculation is, "oh that mine enemy would write a book!" Then the first copy! when what is writ, being writ, and stereotyped—there you are—spite of misrepresenting errors—to be handed over to the microscopic analysis of a cool world, who stick a pin through your heart, and impale you for the museum of the naturalist. Oh the drops of perspiration which stand on your brow, when you find yourself made to say just what you never *did* say; when quotation marks are omitted, and insignificant words are italicised, and your chronology and geography, spite of your careful re-reading, are at fault, and the mischief is to pay generally, and no laudanum handy. Then come those jackals the critics; some of whom reading the title-page, middle chapter, and last sentence, fill out a non-committal review—formula—ready made and provided—for all occasions, and suited to all subjects. Others again wait, before deciding, for the verdict of some Sir Oracle, who hits or misses, just as his breakfast agrees or disagrees with him on that day. Others again so overload you with praise, that every person of common sense immediately concludes the book *must* be a humbug. Another abuses you without stint or limit, for some private grudge against yourself or some one of the same name, it matters not which. Of course, if you are an old stager, you never read a notice at all, after you have thus ascertained how much criticism is worth, and what it amounts to;—not though some of your dear five hundred friends who think it is "shameful" take special pains to bring you an adverse review. You've been behind the scenes, and seen the ropes, and pulleys, and blue lights; it's no use trying to disturb your equanimity in *that* state of things. But if you are a woman, and some ungentlemanly critic reviews not your *book* but *you*, that is another matter; of course, in such a case, you put your pluckiest male friend on the track, and tell him to order his funeral.

Some day you see the other side. A letter comes to you; then another, and another, till mayhap, if you are lucky, you have done counting them; full of love and appreciation, of what you know, better than any body can tell you, is very faulty; but in which, nevertheless, are some of your warmest heart-throbs. It may be a man, or woman, or child, whose spiritual eyes gaze into yours, whose warm hand-grasp reaches you over miles and seas far away, and claims you for a dear though unseen friend; blessing you for some word of yours that has come like a cordial, when heart and soul grew faint, to make life's paths easy to the tired feet. Ah! then your tears fall as you say, *this repays me for all my toil, this is better than a diploma from any college.*

What of the *pecuniary* returns? Oh sure enough; well—if no idiotic accident happens on publication day, if your publisher is not short of "paper" or "copies" at the critical moment when jolly "orders" are coming in, or if he don't "fail" just then, or his store take fire, very likely you'll make a dollar or two. *I* did.

Fanny Fern.

A PERILOUS SLEIGH-RIDE.

In a private letter to us, our popular contributor, Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., gives a brief account of a dangerous adventure he lately had, one stormy night, in company with one of his daughters. Although it was intended only for our private eye, we think that the readers of the Ledger will enjoy the narrative as much as though it had been expressly written for publication.

"On Thursday evening last I rode away eighteen miles to lecture—the only lecture I have delivered this winter. I had promised my friends there that I come, and I could not well put it off. It bid fair to be a moonlight evening, so I went with the promise to my wife that I would return that same night. I took Mary (my eldest daughter) with me. Just as we reached our destination, at five o'clock in the evening, it began to snow. At nine o'clock, when my lecture was through, it stormed furiously. Yet I was resolved to start, and I did so. About half way home—crossing a bleak, desolate hill, where the snow swept across, filling the road full, and making the whole scene one level surface, old Morgan lost the track, and got into the deep snow. It was then just about midnight. I had to unharness him, and lead him to the wall, where I called Mary to hold him while I got the sleigh back into the road. I had to find the track with my feet, as the driving snow had completely obliterated it, and then I had to lead old Morgan back into it. And now, sir, that horse was led over four rods through snow from twelve to fourteen feet deep! The old stage-driver who passed that way in the morning could hardly believe his eyes. Others who have seen the place cannot imagine how it was done. The simple fact is—Morgan knows something. The moment my hand is upon his bit, he knows all is right; and on that night, in that fathomless snow, he obeyed me like a child—never leaping, never plunging, but struggling carefully and bravely—and he came forth from the ordeal without a scratch. Mary froze her hands during the operation, but I stopped and rubbed them in snow until the circulation was restored, and after that we got along quite comfortably. Mary cannot use her fingers very well yet. We were just five hours on the road—from nine until two in the morning. It was a sleigh-ride such as one wouldn't wish to repeat, and yet yielded an adventure well worth remembering."

"Morgan," the horse which Mr. Cobb drove on the perilous journey which he describes, is one of the somewhat famous pair which Mayor Rice, of Boston, purchased for us from Capt. Robbins of that city. He is considered one of the best horses in the State of Maine.

The Secret of Wealth.—The late John Jacob Astor had a brother not so well known as himself, but who possessed in an eminent degree the peculiar characteristic of the family—the art of saving money. It is told of him by an old New Yorker, that intending to operate upon the feelings of an acquaintance of whom he was about to make some purchases, that he gave to the son of the latter, who was playing about the store entrance, a bright penny. The trade concluded, he said to the little fellow, "Johnny, you've played mit the penny long enough; give it back to me." This is said to be a positive fact.

A Compliment to Fanny Fern from A. T. Stewart.—We learn from the Rev. Mr. Field, editor of the *Evangelist*, that A. T. Stewart, the great merchant prince, was recently so delighted with one of Fanny Fern's articles, that he inquired where she resided, in order that he might send her one of the best silk dresses in his store. This is certainly a compliment that any authoress might well be proud of.

The intoxication of anger, like that of the grape, shows us to others, but hides us from ourselves.

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.—No. 81.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

Did it ever enter into your mind to inquire how certain articles of diet were first introduced? Much speculation has been indulged in, respecting the origin of language; how men begun; whether the first parents were born already talking, language being a part of the machine, just as striking is of the clock; or whether they first began by interjections and grunts, which, in time, worked out into words and syllables, until in time language *grew*. Such researches are very profitable, without doubt.

But will it be any less so to inquire into the steps by which the first eaters advanced, the progress of discovery and the eras of invention? It takes no deal of practice to set a child in the line of eating, now that everything is in working order. But how about the first men? Did they go about tasting everything that they saw? or were they instructed? There seems to be no positive evidence that they were, and analogies are against it. I can imagine Eve experimenting upon peaches, whose color invites, whose flavor provokes, a further trial. Strawberries and grapes, how could a hungry soul do less, having smelled of them, than taste? But chestnuts, cocoanuts, and many other things, must have had a history. A chestnut burr does not reward the handling, at first. Perhaps these do not grow in regions first populated, or frosts may have had the first handling of the *burr*, and opened the silk nest in which the nuts had lodged, and then some wind served a writ of ejectment on them. Then the all-devouring *pig* might have experimented upon them. Or squirrels may have been pioneers, and men, observing the satisfaction manifested by their inferiors, may have concluded that it was worth their trial.

But the difficulties do not chiefly lie in the direction of nuts and flavorsome fruits. When was the transition made from cereals and fruits, from roots and leaves, to *flesh?* That must have marked an era.

Is it Charles Lamb that gives the account of the first roast pig? He has not mentioned, if I recollect aright, the authorities consulted, though his known sobriety of judgment and carefulness of statement lead us to conclude that he had satisfactory data for the statements made. But his theory or history does not seem to indicate so much the origin of a general use of flesh, as a local and special taste which sprung up for pig. When did men begin to slay cattle? to dare to eat meat red with its blood? When did they discover that water contained food? Was it not a bold man that first ate fish? But, when we come to crabs and lobsters, the case becomes wonderful! Can any thing be more abhorrent to the first impressions than those sprawling, many-legged, hideous-eyed, nimble, flat dragons of the deep? Suppose a storm to have thrown one upon the store. How dared a man to touch it? He must have been drunk and reckless. But an oyster, that marvel of delicacy, that concentration of sapid excellence, that mouthful before all other mouthfuls, who first had faith to believe it, and courage to execute! The exterior is not persuasive. One would be as likely to gather stones for a luncheon, as the oyster shut fast in his shell. Imagine one opened. The long shell contains this armless, legless, eyeless, pulp, without skin, hair or bone, without motion or sense. What does it most resemble? Every one will have his own imagination. But not one of them, we dare to say, will be something repulsive to taste. Even to this hour, the first acquaintance with oysters is with much hesitation, and squeamish apprehension. Who, then, first gulped the dainty thing, and forever after called himself blessed? I have my own theory.

Some adventurous sailors, probably, were driven ashore, their boat swamped, all their provisions sunk, and half their company drowned. Unable to find root or acorn on the barren shore, afraid to venture back into the country, where, perhaps, they might have been served up for food themselves, they sat upon the beach, disconsolate. Some dry sticks, which the waves cast up, lay near them. By rubbing they kindled a spark, and built a fire upon the sand and stones. They saw oysters lying about, cast up by the violent waves which had been so disastrous to them. Some lay underneath the wood, some at the edge of the coals. The oyster, surprised at such a warm reception, opened his mouth, and could not shut it! From that moment the world was richer. The hungry men believed the benignant gods had wrought a miracle for their salvation. The morsel looked unsavory. But if the divinities had wrought food out of stones, what were they, that they should be afraid to eat? No sooner had they tasted than they were confirmed in their superstition. This was the very food of the gods. A portion had been dropped down for them!

But, now that men have learned to eat such uninviting, and even repulsive things, why should they with ill-timed prejudice turn away from other morsels and delicacies? Why is not a rat as good as a rabbit? Why should men eat *shrimps* and neglect *cockroaches?* Why, in short, should not every plump and well-conditioned insect be turned to good account, some for stews, some for soups, and some for garnishes? A boiled ham, ornamented no longer with useless cloves, but with grasshoppers and roaches! Vermicular soups, as well as Vermicelli? There are stores of luxuries yet in reserve. Instead of taxing our wits to find how to exterminate the insect creation that invade our dwelling, prey upon our harvests, and mar our fruit, let us exchange our tastes, lay aside our prejudices, and attack them with our palate. Once let it be put in full activity, and there is nothing can stand before the human mouth. French *savans* are attempting to introduce horse-flesh to the tables which long have flourished beef. Why not next invade the long-neglected list of delicacies, hitherto despised as luxuries, and made to live a useless life, or even a mischievous one?

Breckenridge, *January 11th*, 1861.

Mr. Bonner:—I am afraid you will think the question I'm about to ask a very foolish one, but there is so much good advice given in your "Ledger," that I cannot refrain from asking your advice about a matter of great importance to me. A young gentleman, (handsome, graceful and intelligent,) with whom I have been acquainted but six or eight months, has been paying a great deal of attention to me ever since our acquaintance; has declared his love for me on several occasions; but for a few weeks back has used a great deal of formality towards me, especially in company with *other* young ladies. Then he scarcely speaks to me. As I possess a very tender regard (of which he's aware) for him, his conduct wounds my feelings very much. Consequently I'm scarcely ever clear of "blues." Now the question is, "What must I do to win back his regard?" for I fear I have lost it; I am confident I never said or did anything (intentionally) to offend him.

Please answer my question, Mr. Bonner, and give me some of your good advice, and I will certainly follow it.

"Leora."

Ask the young man frankly and plainly for an explanation. Perhaps a breath may blow the clouds away. Should it not, raise your head above them, and you will find serene and perpetual sunshine there—if you only get your head high enough.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

AN INCIDENT OF THE WAR OF 1812.

About the middle of December, 1813, the garrison in charge of Fort Niagara, at the mouth of the Niagara river, was surprised by a large party of British and Indians, whereby the American frontier, from Youngstown to Buffalo, was laid open to the depredations of the savages.

One of the most flourishing American villages on the Niagara, was Lewiston, situated opposite to the Canadian village of Queenstown; and as the inhabitants of Lewiston had been active in the defence of the frontier, the enemy doomed the place to speedy destruction.

When the flames and smoke ascending from the wanton conflagration of Youngstown, and the parties of villagers flying from the murderous savages, notified the people of Lewiston of what would soon be the fate of their own homes and families, every one was thrown into the utmost confusion and alarm, and sought safety in flight.

Among the last to escape, were two brothers named Lothrop and Bates Cook, the former of whom, a few days previous, had had his right leg amputated above the knee, and was now a helpless invalid.

Lothrop, who in his crippled condition had no hope of escaping the scalping knife of the savages, begged his brother to leave him, and fly for his life. But the generous young man had no such intention.

With all the haste possible, Bates, after getting the team and sleigh to the door, managed to drag the bed, on which his brother lay, upon the vehicle; and throwing in clothing, and such other necessaries as came nearest to hand, started off in the rear of the flying fugitives. But so rough was the ground, that the wounded youth could not endure other than the slowest motion.

Bates, therefore, found it necessary for him to restrain his team to the slowest walk, while he could see in his rear the flames bursting out of the doors and windows of the house they had just quitted, and the yells and war-whoops of the drunken Indians rang with startling effect in his ears.

House after house was fired, and before the young men had reached the top of the hill, on their way out of the place, the entire village was wrapped in flames.

They could see the painted warriors, wild with drink, and bedecked with the plunder of the stores, dancing and howling in the streets, like so many incarnate demons; and mingled here and there among them, and dodging in and out of the burning buildings, their British associates, as busily engaged in the work of plunder as the savages; while obscene oaths and drunken songs attested their infernal joy.

On the other hand, as they moved slowly along, they could see teams and groups of their neighbors and friends disappearing rapidly in the distance, while they were forced to move along slowly and exposed to the first party of drunken and infuriated savages who might espy them.

Moving thus along, they had proceeded something like half a mile from the smoking village, when on ascending an eminence, Bates was startled by a fierce war-whoop in their rear, and to his horror discovered a band of savages in pursuit of them, and wildly gesticulating to him to stop.

In the excitement of the moment he urged his team to a faster gait; but a cry of pain from Lothrop caused him to slacken speed again; and catching up a gun he had had the forethought to throw into the sleigh, he prepared to defend his helpless brother to the last.

Lothrop, now perceiving the danger they were in, and knowing in his feeble condition that escape was hopeless, unless swifter progress could be made, begged his brother to drive on. At least it could only be death to him; and if the motion of the sleigh over the rough ground should kill him, he thought it would certainly be better than to fall into the hands of their merciless pursuers.

The Indians, dashing on, were soon in hailing distance, and in broken English threatened Bates with the most cruel tortures if he did not stop, but he refused to obey.

Soon coming up with the vehicle, the savages began to chase Bates round and round the sleigh, but from some oversight paid no attention to his helpless brother. At last, Bates snatched the gun from the sleigh, and ran off to one side of the road, to draw the Indians, if possible, away from Lothrop. The ruse partially succeeded; but as a fierce looking warrior pursued Bates more closely than was consistent with his safety, he turned suddenly, and levelling his gun at the savage, fired. The Indian gave a terrific yell, leaped into the air, ran a few paces, and fell dead. The death of their leader exasperated the savages to the last degree, and they were about to wreak the bloodiest vengeance on the brothers, when to their right, upon the side of the mountain, they heard a wild, ringing war-whoop, and the next instant a volley of rifle shots whistled towards them; and several of the pursuers fell killed and wounded to the ground.

This new party proved to be a band of friendly Tuscaroras, under Little Chief, who hearing the firing along the road, hastened to reconnoitre, and seeing the two brothers, whom they immediately recognized, thus beset, ran down the hill to their relief; and of the fifteen or twenty savages who pursued the villagers, scarcely one-fourth returned to tell the fate of their companions.

Bates Cook afterwards became Controller of the State of New York, and Lothrop occupied many positions of trust and distinction, but both now sleep their last sleep.

A CITY LIGHTED BY WATER.

Who can say that the North River will never be set on fire? The city of Aurora, in Indiana, has been, for more than a month past, brilliantly lighted with gas made from water! A few years ago, when a Yankee named Paine suggested the possibility of this method of illumination, the idea was scouted, and finally sneered down. Now his scheme is an accomplished fact. Works have been erected at Aurora, at which the hydrogen is separated from the other gaseous elements of water, and applied with entire success to the lighting of the streets. A Cincinnati paper says that five hundred burners, supplied through seven thousand feet of main pipe, are now in operation there. The gas is almost odorless, very brilliant, and one-third cheaper, it is said, than the gas from coal and rosin. Will not the companies who impose upon New Yorkers such an onerous tax for making darkness visible, and whose ghastly illuminations are shamed by the clouded moon, try what they can do for us with the assistance of the Croton reservoir? We want more light and lighter taxation. It is stated that the water gas works at Aurora emit no smell, while the coal gas works here and in Philadelphia are mephitic nuisances.

Graceful and Elegant.—Grace is, in great measure, a natural gift; elegance implies cultivation, or something of a mere artificial character. A rustic, uneducated girl may be graceful; but an elegant woman must be accomplished and well-trained.

A LONG TEXT, AND A SHORT SERMON.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"I went into a forest, on a plain, and the trees took counsel, and said, Come, let us go and make war against the sea, that it may depart away from us, and that we may make us more woods.

The floods of the sea, in like manner took counsel, and said, Come, let us go up and subdue the woods of the plain, and there also make us another country.

The thought of the wood was in vain, for the fire came and consumed it.

The thought of the floods of the sea came also to nought, for the sands stood up and stopped them.

If thou wert to judge now, between these two, whom wouldst thou begin to justify, or whom wouldst thou condemn?

Then I answered and said, Verily, it is a foolish thing that they both devised, for the ground is given unto the woods, and the sea also hath his place to bear his floods."

Second of Esdras, 4th chapter, 13th to 19th.

Oh bright green trees, and forests deep,
How fair ye are to view,
The sun-tinge on your waving heads
Impearl'd with crystal dew.

Thou too art fair, oh mighty Sea,
Thy billows all at rest,
And Heaven's reflected image clear
Upon thy pulsing breast.

Abide in amity, ye floods,
And groves with verdant track,
Break not the league Creation made,
Nor call dark Chaos back.

Agree to differ, each to each
Divine forbearance show,
And countless blessings rich and long
Shall from the compact flow.

Why seek to do each other harm?
Strife wins no great renown;
But Peace and Love, of angel-birth,
Bring God's approval down.

Hartford, Conn., Jan. 22d, 1861.

* * *

MOSES ORAN;

OR,

"THE BURGLARS' NEST."

BY GEO. CLARENCE BLANCHARD.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW OSBORNE WAS PROMOTED.

With glaring eyes and scowling brows the ruffians turned from the closet where they had thrust the detective, and ranging themselves round the table, gave way to exciting and prolonged discussion.

A variety of propositions were offered and debated upon at great length: some were for stringing him up in the lynch style, others recommended the milder remedy of throttling, while Mr. Slinger contended for the honor of crushing him to death with his boot heel.

"Vot's the use of vasting all this ere time, any vay?" growled that gentleman, vindictively. "Let's finish 'im at vunce."

"Curse him!" yelled the gang, moved by a sudden revengeful impulse. They were about to rush towards the closet, when Mr. Snag dissuaded them again.

"Stop, boys," said he; "a detective isn't a sort of game that can be cotched every day. While we have 'im let's make the most of it."

"Werry good," observed Mr. Molecat, approvingly. "It vouldn't be werry right to perwent 'im from saying his prayers, either, vich my old friend in the pad line allus said made 'em die easy."

"Snag, what would you do with him?" asked a dozen voices.

"Hang him up by the toes, and pink him with a knife point," replied Mr. Snag; "then he'd know wot's happenin'."

"A werry rum idea, boys," observed Mr Slinger; "vot do you all say to that ere?"

"Good!" exclaimed several.

Mr. Snag's humane proposition was thereupon adopted without one dissenting voice. Leaping to their feet, the ruffians made a tumultuous rush for the closet, Mr. Slinger taking the lead. Scarcely, however, had that gentleman gained the entrance, before he uttered a most horrid imprecation; his comrades pressed forward, stopped short in intense astonishment, and then belched forth a perfect torrent of oaths and execrations.

"Fiends and fury!" gasped Mr. Slinger, "the bird 'as flown!"

An examination of the closet confirmed the astounding fact. The detective had disappeared, but how, it was not easy at that moment to explain.

Hastily catching up a light, Mr. Slinger carefully scrutinized the interior.

"Cuss 'im, 'ere it is!" exclaimed he, frantically; "look!'

A small door opening into the next room, which had hitherto escaped their observation, was revealed to their astonished gaze. Gambles's house not being the regular rendezvous of the burglars, it is not surprising they should have been ignorant of its existence.

As soon as they could squeeze through, the baffled villains swarmed in, cursing loudly. A window that opened on a porch was wide open, and suggested to them the modus operandi of the detective's escape.

Mr. Slinger impetuously jumped out, followed by half a score of the desperadoes, and having quickly dropped into the yard, descried a man's head peeping from the outside. Uttering a yell of exultation, the burglar sprang towards him with uplifted knife, when half way he was met by a stunning blow which sent him whirling to the ground, the blood spouting from his nostrils.

Mr. Slinger cowed in a moment.

"Who, in the devil's name, set you doing this?" exclaimed the Tomtit, angrily, for it was he; "now, then, what's all this for?"

Raising his lantern, he surveyed the disconcerted group of burglars with an aspect of intense astonishment.

It was some moments before any of them had the courage to communicate the real facts; but when it fairly came out, the enraged burglar chief poured upon them a perfect torrent of abuse.

"Your cursed stupidity will yet be the ruination of us all," growled he, as soon as they had returned to their room; "continually thwarting my best laid plans—overturning all my schemes. When you had him, though," continued he, "why didn't you finish him at once?"

"That's vot I said," quoth Mr. Slinger; "I'm werry straightfor'ard an' up to the mark, ven I do business; I give adwice, and werry waluable adwice, but it's all thrown avay."

The Tomtit made no reply to this philosophical remark, but strode the room backward and forward with hasty, impatient tread.

The burglars, to console themselves for their streak of ill fortune, drank a glass of whiskey punch all around, and discussed the principal features of the affair. Meanwhile, as the reader, perhaps, may feel some slight curiosity to know how Mr. Duffy effected his escape, we will return to where we left off in our last chapter.

In momentary expectation of being dragged from the closet and slaughtered, the detective calmly awaited his fate. Presently he heard a slight noise near him; he partially turned, for it seemed to him as though the sound was almost at his elbow. Judge of his amazement when a voice whispered in his ear, "*A friend is near, and he will save you!*" Before the detective could recover from his surprise, he felt his arm gently pulled, and without the slightest hesitation he passively followed, crawling out of an opening. As far as he could see, he recognized in his deliverer a mere stripling. He had no opportunity to ask questions, for the youth conducted him quickly to the window which was previously opened.

Giving him a few hasty directions, he placed a pistol in his hand. "Go!" he added, "you have no time to lose. Every moment is precious. The wolves will soon be on your track. Away! before I lack the power to save!"

"How comes this noble heart in such a den of infamy?" inquired Mr. Duffy, as he prepared to obey.

"*By chance!* My name is Osborne. It is a long story, and a strange one. Associated with burglars, I am an enemy to their principles! *Hist!* I can hear them even now. They are moving towards the closet. Away! before it is too late!"

Duffy, with grateful emotions, pressed his deliverer's hand, sprang out of the window and safely descended below.

Osborne waited till his retreating footsteps could be no longer heard, and was about to close the window, when the yells of the disappointed cut-throats announced their discovery of the detective's flight. He felt sure their next movement would be there, and hastily glided out. He was barely in time, for his fingers had scarcely left the latch before he heard them pouring through the aperture.

He cautiously crept up stairs, and flung himself on his couch, rejoicing at the success of his bold and daring manœuvre.

While thinking on the probable results, he heard the heavy tread of some one coming up stairs, and was in a moment in sound slumber.

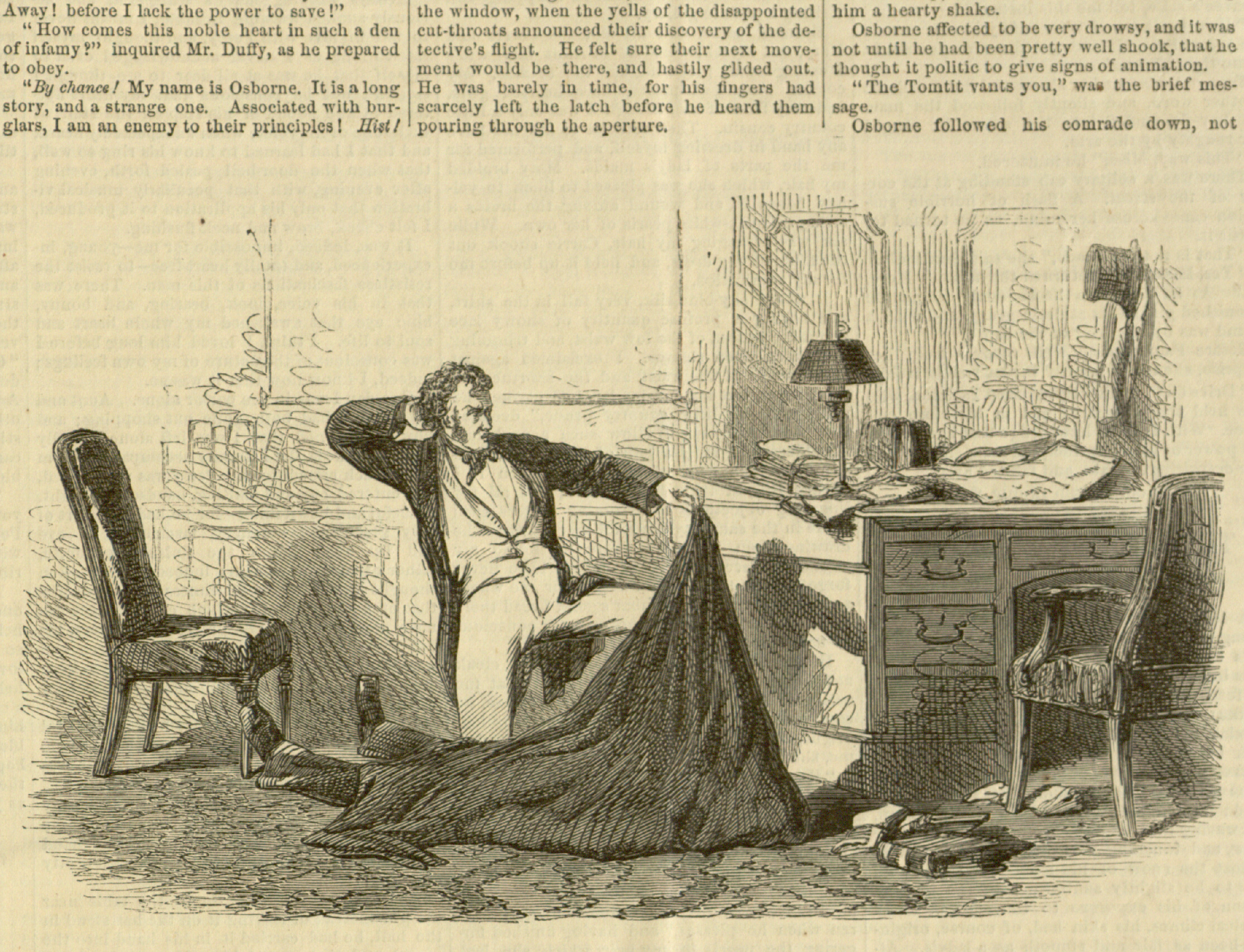
The door opened and a burglar entered.

"Vake up, Pluck!" called the man, giving him a hearty shake.

Osborne affected to be very drowsy, and it was not until he had been pretty well shook, that he thought it politic to give signs of animation.

"The Tomtit vants you," was the brief message.

Osborne followed his comrade down, not without some misgivings that he was about to sustain the fiery ordeal of a cross-examination.



AN UNPROFITABLE ASSASSINATION.

Things certainly looked suspicious. There were the burglars, all drawn up with stern and solemn countenances; and in the centre stood the Tomtit, his own features as dark and ominous as possibly could be conceived.

Osborne, however, put on a bold face, and marched in; the Tomtit's restless eye was fixed on him steadily for a few moments; the youth's face expressed the most natural surprise.

"Leave this room, boys, till I call you," said the chief, meaningly.

The order was silently obeyed.

"Young man," said the Tomtit, pronouncing his words carefully and slowly, "you have been called up early; now, then, I'll tell you what for."

The burglar chief thereupon gave a brief outline of the capture and subsequent escape of the detective.

"I'm glad to know," continued the Tomtit, "that you didn't mix yourself up with this stupid plot. A plot which makes it necessary for us to change our rendezvous. I've remarked that you possess a steady nerve, a quiet, silent disposition. I like such men; and would your pals were all like you; but while they are useful, faithful at their work, and banded in steady, mutual alliance, pledged to sustain each other, and never to reveal the secrets of our trade, their coarser natures lead them to break out in wild acts, insubordinate, and hurtful even to themselves. They want a man to watch them, invested with authority, and such a man I have selected. Can you guess who it is?"

Osborne nodded his head.

"For myself," pursued the Tomtit, "I have no time to be watching up the knaves; but you are well qualified, and with more experience, I have no doubt will be active, prompt and ever watchful. *Boys!*"

The Tomtit struck his heel against the floor, and the burglars returned.

"Here's your lieutenant; in my absence his authority is law."

The burglars for the most part cheerfully acquiesced in the Tomtit's selection. Some few murmured at the idea of a boy being promoted over them; but, as Mr. Snag observed, "If vun-eyed Snag could bear it, all of 'em might;" so the appointment was unanimously confirmed.

"Now boys," remarked the Tomtit, with a complacent glance at his new lieutenant, "I'm off, and the quicker you follow the better, for I expect that infernal Duffy back again in a streak of lightning. *White's* is our next city nest."

The Tomtit without further remark left the room, and Osborne for the first time found himself invested with the supreme command.

The ruffians busied themselves, preparatory to evacuating the premises. Mr. Gambles, the owner thereof, ventilated his ill humor in a shower of complimentary curses on his unlucky associates for depriving him of a "waluable home," as he expressed it, while Osborne stood surveying the preparations with an air of affected indifference.

"'Elloo! vot's this 'ere!" ejaculated Mr. Slinger, who was inside the closet, stirring round with a lantern.

Mr. Snag and Molecat rushed in, and he heard them utter a similar exclamation of astonishment.

"Wot a go!" followed Mr. Snag's voice, "blow me if it taint Pluck!"

"The werry image of 'im!" observed Mr. Slinger. "Vy if it hadn't on a vimen's rig I should say it vos Pluck out and out; the werry moral of 'im! 'Ello Pluck, 'ere vith you!"

Osborne, who was considerably surprised by their unintelligible remarks, and curious to know their meaning, hurried in.

Mr. Slinger held a miniature in his hand, which his companions were staring at with an aspect of bewildered astonishment.

"What is the matter?" inquired Osborne, quietly.

"Vot's the matter?" repeated Mr. Slinger, gazing at our hero and then again on the picture, "vy, you rum 'un, vot you doing vith this 'ere?"

Osborne glanced at the miniature, and with difficulty repressed an exclamation of wonder. The fair face, the blue eyes, the brown tresses, seemed to influence him with a strange, mysterious spell. "Oh give it me!" he exclaimed with sudden earnestness. His comrades shrugged their shoulders as they handed him over the picture. "Where did you find it?" he asked.

"Vere did we find it?" repeated Mr. Slinger, "vy I found it 'ere; werry likely you dropped it Pluck ven you vent to snooze."

It may be stated that Osborne had occasionally used this closet to nap in.

"Vot do you vant uv yer pictur rigged that 'ere vay?" inquired Mr. Slinger, whose unrivalled judgment had adopted the conclusion that it could be no other than a likeness of Osborne.

Our hero made no reply; he saw at a glance that they supposed it belonged to him, and he did not contradict it.

Mr. Slinger shrugged his shoulders with a dubious air; Mr. Molecat scratched his head, and one-eyed Snag looked very meaningly out of his one eye, which intended to convey that his protégè was not disposed to be very communicative.

Osborne retreated to a corner of the room, and gazed long and earnestly on the fair prototype.

"The detective certainly dropped this," thought he, "and yet I feel as though it belonged to me."

What strange, unspeakable emotions thrilled through his heart; it was a new, indefinable and mysterious feeling, and while he looked he fancied the laughing features changed to a serious, pensive cast, and the blue eyes lit up with a life-like expression of tenderness and love.

He was no longer in the rude company of the burglars, but wandering far away in the realms of fancy, led on by that mysterious influence of sympathy that links our souls with objects we have never seen and only dream of.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. JOB TARLETON MAKES A SERIOUS MISTAKE.

Long after Osborne had left the office, Mr. Job Tarleton sat in the same position, a sneer playing over his features as his mind gradually reverted to the mysterious visitor and brooded over the dark plot he had already hatched.

He looked at his watch. It was eight o'clock. Turning to his desk he pored over a number of papers, with a listless, nervous air, then pushed them aside and rose from his seat. He walked the room to and fro for a few moments, and abruptly pausing before the lamp, extinguished it, and recommenced his uneasy tread—then he lit it again and examined his watch—replaced it in its fob, and walked back and forth as before.

There was a hurried knock at the door; a boy was outside with a note from Mr. Van Cleeker. Tarleton impatiently tore it open and read with surprise the announcement of Osborne's arrest. The missive concluded with the earnest request that he would call immediately. He wrote on the back, in pencil, saying private business would call him out of town that evening, and dismissed the boy, telling him not to return.

"Curse this unlucky accident," muttered he, as soon as he was alone, "could that villain Grimely have deceived me?"

He paced the room with disquieted tread, thinking on this, till his thoughts gradually settled back in the old channel, and the dark sneer flitted over his features. It was now ten o'clock and he wondered why the time passed so slowly. It seemed to him an age, almost, and he thought, too, he was agitated, for his knees trembled, and the perspiration stood on his brow—he wiped it off and continued, walking up and down, alternately gazing at his watch and listening till he grew feverish with wild impatience. Yet he felt that he was cool—perfectly so—his nerves were steady—never steadier—the excitement must be imaginary—he pulled out his knife again, looked at it and held it up in the air to see if it trembled in his grasp. He could not detect the slightest tremor, and then a dark scowl passed over his face as he thought of the cloaked man, and knew the power he possessed to expose him.

"It shall never be!" he muttered fiercely, "were a hundred lives to be sacrificed, Job Tarleton's reputation shall not suffer."

He writhed as he thought of the consequences of an exposé. His social position to be ruined, or yield up Fanny Van Cleeker; and thus the minutes chased by, and the lawyer continued his restless vigil. Eleven o'clock! what solemn stillness reigns around! he could hear the ticking of his watch, so quiet was the calm that pervaded the room. He did not move now, but stood like a statue, listening. Hark! a quiet tread is heard ascending the steps. It approaches nearer. Job Tarleton softly crept on tip toe and blew out the light; grasping his weapon more tightly, he stations himself near the door, and awaits his approach—the door swings open—he fancies he sees the long cloak and slouched hat, he hesitates no longer, but raising his knife high in the air, it descends with fearful power on the victim's head; uttering a deep groan the form tumbles headlong to the floor, and all is still.

Job Tarleton exultantly closed and locked the door, then after assuring himself that life was extinct, he groped to the mantel-piece, and with flurried eagerness struck a light—the corpse was lying there with the cloak half flung over the face.

The murderer stooped down and pushed it away, when, horror of horrors! he staggered back with a cry of mingled amazement and consternation, for staring upon him with its open eyes horribly grotesque, were the lifeless remains of his own partner, Mr. Pump.

For a few seconds the lawyer gazed on the stiffened features of the murdered man, and then he impulsively covered the face.

"Merciful heavens! what a dreadful mistake!" muttered he, rising with a fearful glance around him. "I should have known his step at any other time. Dead—and by my own hand!"

He pressed his fevered palm against his brow, and gazed mechanically on the motionless piece of clay, and then, like a flash, thought of the expected visitor, and of the new danger that menaced him. No time was to be lost. The body must be disposed of. The cunning lawyer, never at fault for a way, quickly hit upon his scheme. Leaving the knife still in the corpse, and wrapping the cloak around it, he carried, half dragged, it into the street. Drawing the weapon from the gaping wound, he stretched the body in a natural position, and suddenly shouted out at the top of his voice—

"Murder! Help! ho! watch!"

One of the night guards, who was treading his measured beat, heard the cry, and running up, saw Tarleton bending over his partner with distracted attitude.

"Help, ho!" exclaimed the lawyer. "Murder's done here—murder—quick, for the love of Heaven!"

The night-watch sprang his rattle, and was instantly joined by a number of auxiliaries.

"Where did he run? Which direction?" hastily inquired one of the officials, with the intuitive quickness of his calling.

"That way," returned Tarleton, artfully pointing in an opposite direction. "He had on a long cloak and a slouched hat. Be quick, for Heaven's sake; five hundred dollars to the man who arrests him dead or alive. Ah, my dear friend!" he added, in well counterfeited emotion, "have they murdered you?"

While some started off in pursuit of the supposed fugitive, a few lingered to take charge of the dead body.

"Who did this deed?" inquired one of the guard, as he examined the stab, from which the blood was slowly oozing.

"I know not," returned Tarleton, with a distracted air. "I was returning from my office in company with my friend, when all at once a man such as I have described jumped from that corner, and, with one well-directed blow, laid him at my feet. I made at him, but he was too quick for me, and escaped."

"Did you say he had a cloak on?" queried another, fixing his eye sharply on Tarleton.

It was right near a street-lamp, and the ray fell on the features of Tarleton; they slightly blanched.

"I should think a cloak would have encumbered his flight?" continued the other.

"So it might," rejoined Tarleton, inwardly cursing the man for questioning him; "but he slipped it off while running."

The officer looked hard at Tarleton, the story seemed so improbable, and a sinister expression on his face at that moment aroused a gleam of suspicion.

"Your name?" he inquired, briefly.

"*Tarleton—Job Tarleton*, sir, of Oxford Place."

The lawyer spoke haughtily, and his face flushed.

Every one knew Job Tarleton by reputation, and the officer tipped his cap respectfully, and asked no more questions.

Seeing the body conveyed to the neighboring station-house, and satisfying himself that no further suspicion was excited in their minds, the lawyer returned to his office. Scarcely had he entered before he noticed a clot of blood on the floor; he took a rag and cleaned it carefully up, and burnt the rag in the fire. Having removed all the stains and traces of the gore, he bethought himself of his knife—that, too, was besmeared with blood, and he remembered there was some hair of the unfortunate Mr. Pump sticking to its haft. A shudder crept through his frame, on searching for it in its accustomed place, to find it was gone. He plunged his hand into every pocket, fumbling even in places too small, and repeating the search nearly a dozen times; the cold sweat stood on his brow.

It was undoubtedly gone. He frantically caught up a light, and searched out in the passage, with the faint hope of having dropped it on his return; then he went out into the street and renewed his search there, but he looked and hunted in vain. He had some reason to be alarmed, for the name of Job Tarleton was carved on the handle, and he knew the discovery of it would lead to his detection. He fairly gnashed his teeth with concentrated passion. He swore, he blasphemed, and tore the hair from his head in handfuls, as he contemplated the danger; and then he thought of the mysterious stranger, the one whom he had marked; he had escaped him after all, and the stigma of murder rested on him—the pet of society, the favorite of ladies, the wealthy, the influential Job Tarleton! He shook his fist and raved in his fearful, impotent passion.

The night passed on, and he still strode around the room, and as the first streaks of dawn struggled into the dismal office, his haggard countenance and blood-shot eyes showed the effects of the mental excitement.

Before any one was stirring, he might have been seen moving in the street, anxiously prying around for the tell-tale knife. It was nowhere to be found, and with emotions of a wild and reckless nature, he sat himself down; then he grew calmer, and cogitated long and earnestly; the weapon might be found by some one ignorant of the tragedy, the incident rapidly forgotten, or it might be returned to him. He would have given half his fortune at that moment for the handle only of that important knife.

The more he thought of it, the cooler and more rational he became; he would put a good face on the matter; there was no use in giving way to apprehensions which might never be realized. He smiled at his late fears, and having adjusted his apparel, and smoothed his hair, he walked off to his residence.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BALL, AND AN INCIDENT.

Several days have passed since we left the Van Cleeker House. The exciting events of Orborne's arrest, and subsequent escape from jail, is followed by the startling news of the murder of Mr. Pump; and these, after eliciting their due quantum of remark and comment, have become the things of the past.

It is the evening of the grand ball of the Beagles. The Beagles occupied a high social position in Philadelphia, and their ball had been the topic of conversation amongst the fashionables for a month past. Anticipation is often better than reality, and so it is with balls. Racing from dry good store to dry good store after costly dresses, fuming and fretting with your milliner about the variation of a fold, talking breathlessly in the street to a chance acquaintance concerning what Mrs. So-and-so, and Madame Such-a-one, intend to wear, make up the excitement matter of these grand occasions.

Fanny is in her dressing-room, resplendent with her low-necked satin dress, pearl earrings and necklace.

Mrs. Platt and Nancy bustle around, suggesting a variety of alterations, while she herself is absorbed in earnest thought. Since the arrest of Osborne she had grown gloomy and depressed. Insensibly her sympathies were concentrating upon him, and even in the brief acquaintance his handsome face and winning manners had made dangerous headway in her little heart. Unconscious of it she certainly was, for Fanny Van Cleeker was scarcely romantic enough to suit the tastes of our modern belles. She was innocent; and in her very innocence—in her very simple, child-like nature—she little dreamt that all that strong confidence, abiding faith, and glowing sympathy, was but the first touches of a mysterious passion that winds around our hearts its subtle folds.

Osborne's true character had not been revealed by her to the household; her womanly, intuitive perceptions taught her that the disclosure now could be attended with no advantage; nor was her confidence impaired in his sincerity on reading of his wonderful and daring escape from jail. She even rejoiced in it.

"There, my dear," observed Mrs. Platt, glancing at her complacently, as she put the last finishing touch to her toilet. "You look beautiful, indeed, and I shouldn't be at all surprised if you turned out the handsomest girl there, in spite of your putting on that long face. Seeing Mr. Tarleton won't be there, I must say it looks very strange in you, my dear."

"I am sure I do not care whether I go or not," returned Fanny, listlessly. "Father plagued me so, I consented."

"Well, you are a strange girl!" rejoined Mrs. Platt. "Young people generally are very fond of balls and parties; but, now I come to think of it, I never could abide parties myself, and it appeared so ridiculous to see people making such a fuss just to spend a few hours in a hot room, and dance and whirl about so foolishly. To tell the truth, my dear, I think you act very sensible; but as brother seems to think you ought to go I would make the best of it."

"Aunt Susan," said she, after a short pause, "do you suppose Mr. Tarleton would be really so indecent as to come, so soon after the death of his partner?"

"He can't feel, certainly, like it," returned Mrs. Platt. "You needn't be afraid; I don't think he will."

It was indeed the only inducement that had prevailed upon our heroine to go.

"I never speak of Mr. Tarleton," pursued Mrs. Platt, sorrowfully, "without bringing to mind that treacherous, ungrateful Jerry. I am sure I would never have believed he was a burglar, for he didn't look like one, though now I come to think of it, I never saw any of those kind of people. It is very frightful to think of, and if I had known it I wouldn't have lent him histories, and taken such pains to improve his mind."

"Come, Fanny, aint you ready yet?" called Mr. Van Cleeker, who was waiting impatiently in the passage.

"There, my dear, run immediately!" said Mrs. Platt, enveloping Fanny's little graceful form in a hood and thick shawl.

She hurried out and joined her father, and he took her arm and conducted her to the carriage. Rapidly they drove through the silent streets, and in due course of time wheeled up before the palatial mansion of the Beagles, from which a hundred lights were gleaming, and the sound of festive music could be heard. Lines of aristocratic carriages were filing along, depositing their loads of feminine freight on the little strip of carpet that terminated at the threshold of the residence. Leaving our friends, the Van Cleekers, to alight, let us precede them up stairs, and float with some white muslin nymph into the spacious and splendid parlors of the Beagles. What an animated scene! All the glittering colors of the rainbow are circling round and dazzling the eye with its ever changing beauty.

Mrs. Beagles is in her meridian, and receives her friends with winning grace and affability. Now the band strikes up, and the voluptuous waltz commences. Prim puritanism would turn aside her head while the couples spin round in the delicious whirl. Everybody has so many remarks to make, and plenty of ogling, whispering, and twitching of dresses, which last performance, we remember, was less in vogue then than now. Young ladies dance, and laugh, and chat, and bear with heroism the squeezing of fashionable stays, to satisfy the inexorable demands of fashion. Apoplectic, short-necked gentlemen view the lively scene with complacent satisfaction. The beaux talk insipid nonsense to still more insipid women. The belles glow with flushed vanity at compliments they have heard a hundred times before; and the envious feel their hearts cankered again in witnessing the triumph of some hated rival. Such affected airs, such turning, and twisting, and asking pretty questions, that have been learned beforehand, all to extort adulation.

And these sights and scenes are ever the same, recurring each time, unvarying and monotonous, with the inevitable termination of aching heads and disappointed hearts.

The brilliancy of the scene, the magnificent mirrors, the splendid candelabras, and the rich and showy dresses of the ladies, were enough to dazzle and confuse girls more experienced than Fanny Van Cleeker. It was something new to behold this glittering assemblage, and watch the giddy dancers as they whirled around. She gazed around with pleased surprise, unconscious that her entrance had caused an involuntary buzz of admiration. She was in turn a novelty to them. It was a rare sight to meet such a young girl in a ball room. Mammas are not very anxious to have their daughters "come out." Fanny was not blessed with a mother, or perhaps it would have been different.

Mrs. Beagles advanced and graciously saluted them.

"I'm so glad your father brought you. You selfish creature!" she added, with a playful wave of her finger towards Mr. Van Cleeker. "If it hadn't been for me, this dear little piece of femininity would be withering away these new blown charms in her dreary chamber."

Mrs. Beagles was very disinterested in her anxiety to introduce Fanny in society, having deferred her own daughter's appearance till she rebelled, and declared her own independence.

Mr. Van Cleeker was surrounded by a troop of congratulatory gentlemen in white vests and high shirt collars. The flippant Mrs. Beagles meanwhile drew away the little maiden, and introduced her to a rattling young sophomore, who entertained her with discoursing about himself, and criticizing the beauty of Philadelphia.

The music is playing its loveliest air, and the dancers whirl joyously around, till the mirrors and candelabras spin dizzily in company, and the ogling, and flirting, and small talk increases in spirit, and Fanny herself, naturally gay and joyous, feels herself infected with the the general glee. Her tongue loosens, and she talks with a freedom, a piquancy and ease that soon draw an eager and admiring group around her. Her lively repartee and playful witticisms are something new in a young girl. In the midst of her gay conversation, her voice suddenly falters, and an expression of dismay overspreads her face.

Mr. Tarleton was just entering the room. The lawyer's presence excited considerable remark, it being so recent after the death of his friend. He, however, appeared in exuberant spirits, and looked remarkably well, and was withal exceedingly chatty.

As soon as Fanny could decently leave her little coterie, she excused herself, and hastened to rejoin her father. She thought that if she plead sickness, it would give her an opportuntty of escaping from the disagreeable society of Mr. Tarleton.

Mr. Van Cleeker was nowhere to be seen.

Miss Clara Beagles met her half way, and playfully tapped her on the shoulder.

"*Why*, Fanny, all alone! Come, I want to introduce you to a gentleman whom I know you will be delighted with."

"I do not feel well; please excuse me," said Fanny, hurriedly. "I am looking for papa—have you seen him?"

"What! you do not intend to go home already?" rejoined Miss Beagles, in surprise.

"I fear I must," returned Fanny, endeavoring to conceal her real feelings.

Fanny found her way to the supper room, but as no father was there, she reluctantly returned and retired to the furthest corner of the room, where she hoped she might escape Tarleton's observation. Alas! for her hopes! The lawyer, who had been eagerly looking around for her, quickly spied her out and in a moment was by her side.

"My sweet little charmer," he whispered, seizing her unwilling hand and softly pressing it as he spoke, "I have been hunting for you this hour; have you no kind word for me? Ah? how you treat your devoted, adoring admirer!"

She gave him a look of the most unequivocal disgust. He mastered his emotion, however, and pursued:

"Sweet Fanny, I have kept deferring our marriage in the hope that you would not force me to wed you on compulsion; but say, dear girl, that your willing heart yields but the hundredth part of consent and Job Tarleton will rest contented."

They were standing in a little recess near the window, and the lawyer had drawn himself so near to the little beauty that his hot breath fanned her cheek.

She shrank back, not with fear, but with such marked aversion, that he exclaimed:

"Do you hate me so?" his eyes assuming their old fierce gleam.

"Mr. Tarleton," replied Fanny, firmly and decidedly, "if you lack the sense to perceive it, I will be frank with you. I do despise you, from my inmost soul!"

"Girl! girl!"

"Yes," she replied, haughtily, "you think to wed me. Never, never. I will leave house and home before I will submit. I know your treachery! your baseness!"

Mr. Job Tarleton's cheek blanched. He thought of the mysterious stranger. Could he have already given information?

"What mean you?" he asked, with an attempt at calmness, that showed the conflict within.

"Employing a spy to watch my father; using your power over him, to force his daughter into an unholy match."

Tarleton's face turned pale and red by turns.

"It is not true. Where did you learn this?"

"Mr. Tarleton, from your own emissary's lips I heard the story of your baseness."

"The lying whelp, he wronged me," gasped the lawyer, passionately. "And so you believe this young scoundrel, who, it seems, has turned out a villain of the deepest dye?"

"You know him not," returned Fanny, with impetuous indignation; "he is a noble-minded youth, and scorns your guilty purposes."

Poor Fanny! the unguarded sentences had scarcely left her lips before she would have given worlds to have recalled them, but it was too late."

The lawyer moved nearer to her, with a face of impotent rage. He comprehended even more than she had intended to convey.

"You shall repent this," he whispered, menacingly. "If all the fiends should rise against me, I'll break your haughty spirit!"

He turned and left her.

Fanny Van Cleeker remained in the recess for a few moments, flushed and agitated. How she lamented her precipitancy! Just as she was about to retire, a waiter approached her.

"Your father wishes to see you," said the servant.

"Where is he?" inquired the little maiden.

The servant pointed to the door.

Fanny was surprised, on reaching it, to see a strange man with her hood and shawl.

"Is this Miss Van Cleeker?" inquired the man, tipping his hat respectfully.

"It is," replied she, in surprise.

"Mr. Van Cleeker wants you to hurry right down, Miss. He's sick."

"What is the matter?" she exclaimed, in alarm, remembering his last ill turn. "For Heaven's sake, tell me this instant!"

"He's better, and now safely in the coach. He ordered me, Miss, to get these, so you might come right down."

Fanny hurried on her shawl and hood without another word, and silently followed the man. As they descended into the street he caught her roughly by the arm.

"This way, Miss," he muttered.

There was a solitary cab standing at the corner of the street. A flash of horrible suspicion came across her mind, as he turned towards it.

"That is not the coach," she said, hurriedly.

"Yes, Miss, it is," returned the man. "Here, sir." As he said this he suddenly caught the astonished girl in his athletic grasp, and with a bound was by the door of the cab.

Before Fanny could well recover from her surprise, she found herself thrust rudely inside.

"Drive on!" exultantly shouted Tarleton, who now held the struggling girl in his close embrace. With the full knowledge that she was in the power of that unprincipled man, she uttered one despairing scream, and fainted away.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE IDOL OF AN HOUR.

BY ELIZABETH CAMPBELL.

A long, long time ago, when my heart was young, I had, like other foolish youngsters, girls and boys, what people call a beau ideal. This beau ideal was to be tall, not much below six feet; well-proportioned, graceful and Apollo-like; with a face faultlessly handsome, in the Grecian style; with a firm, resolute mouth, and dark brown eyes; his foot was to be a perfect marvel in the way of a foot, and his hand was to be just as much of a marvel in the way of a hand; his hair was to be black, glossy, silken, and waving in light curls around his bold, white brow, and touching with its raven blackness against the snow of his neck—for though he was to be slightly sunburned in the face by reason of his exposure to the suns of many tropical climes, his skin had, of course, originally been as fair and smooth as a lady's. Altogether, my beau ideal was to be, as beau ideals of either sex invariably are, that greatest of natural curiosities—a perfect human being.

And I was to love him?

Oh, yes, indeed! I should think I was!

"But the dreams of youth with youth will fade," you know, "as the years go drifting on, through the silver light and the solemn shade. And so my dreams have gone." That is, the dreams of my very early youth faded, for I had not to wait till youth itself was gone before I fell in love; it was only the dream of my beau ideal that faded, or rather came to me in real, palpable form, only under a very different likeness from that in which I had always looked upon it to appear.

Percy was not at all six feet in hight; I don't think he was more than two or three inches taller than myself, and I was only an inch above the medium hight of woman; he was slight, graceful, light and ærial as a girl; his hands and feet, indeed, I must not omit to say, were as much marvels of beauty as any I had ever seen in my dreams; but there all likeness to my beau ideal ended. His eyes were as blue as the vault of heaven's skies, brimful of pure, white light, and shadowing forth five hundred different expressions. Ah, my Percy's eyes! There never was such another pair—never, never! And his mouth! I think it must have been stolen from a cherub, it was so lovely; a little pouting rosebud, only that rosebuds never were so pretty, for the lips were like crimson velvet. But don't fancy that his face lacked character, and power, and force, because he stole his mouth from some angel ere he came down from above; it possessed all three to the fullest degree; and the aquiline nose, stern and proud, the strong though close shaven beard, and the silken moustache, redeemed it from all charge of effeminacy, even the faintest. A rich, dark, goldenish brown was the glossy, abundant mass of hair tossed back from his white brow, that ever came stealing back, in clustering curls, to nestle around the blue-veined temples.

And that was Percy—my Percy, my darling! I am forgetting—I always do when I talk of him—I am going to tell you a story. Here it is.

When I first met him—Percy Dunbar I mean, of course—I was nineteen years of age, but not so old in heart, and experience, and knowledge of the world, as many girls are at fifteen.

I was paying a visit to an aunt of mine, who lived in New York, and as it was the first time I had ever been in a large city, there was plenty to engage my attention and elicit my admiration, so that when, among the rest, I met Percy, it was not a case of love at first sight, because I was filled with so many new and strange sensations, that I had hardly any place to put a new one, and as I had, in a few weeks, got over my terrible country habit of blushing and becoming confused at meeting strangers, I received my introduction to Percy in a perfectly easy and natural manner.

My aunt and cousins, with whom he was a great pet, laughingly warned me of him, even in his presence, and said he was a "gay deceiver," a "flirt," and a "male coquette" of the very worst description.

He shrugged his shoulders, and pouted like a pretty, petted girl, but instead of refuting the charges thus brought against him, he acknowledged all in the words—

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Lincoln, that is right. Warn Miss Marvin against me; bid her beware in time, for I'm a dreadful fellow, you know," and turning to me, he assumed the expression of a grieved and unjustly treated child.

My aunt and cousins laughed heartily, and I could not help joining them in their merriment, for though had any one, an hour previous, told me of such a thing upon the part of a man, I would have thought it the most absurd and abominable piece of affectation. I declare to you, as I saw that same piece of affectation then, I thought I had never seen anything so pretty in my life. After a moment he laughed too, and straightway all constraint and ceremony vanished; we were the best friends in the world, and in ten minutes we were as deeply engaged in conversation as though we had been known to each other for years. Before he rose to go, he had engaged us all to go to the theatre that night, and as it was the first time time that I had ever entered a place of the kind, I anticipated very great delight from the evening's amusement. A great actress was to play, of whom I had heard so much I was quite wild at the idea of seeing her, and expressed myself as being in the highest degree pleased by the prospect before me. Percy smiled, and seemed to enjoy the enthusiastic manner in which I expressed my anticipated delight, till my aunt good-naturedly suggested to me "not to make a goose of myself," and as we were all so gay that almost anything served to make us laugh, there was another burst of merriment at this innocent remark, and Percy, having made his adieus, bowed and left us.

The rest of the morning was spent in deciding what dresses we should wear, and that momentous question satisfactorily set at rest, we had only time to prepare for an early dinner, as the afternoon was to be spent in shopping, and visiting a picture gallery.

Evening came, and my cousins Carrie and Mary, and myself, were all in Aunt Margaret's dressing-room, preparing for the theatre. My cousins were gay, pretty, warm-hearted girls, and very fond of me, though I was only a little country cousin. They refused to let me have any hand in dressing myself, and performed for me the parts of lady's maids. Mary braided my hair, which she was pleased to liken to yellow floss-silk, and wound among the braids a string of milk-white pearls of her own. While she was arranging my hair, Carrie shook out the folds of my dress, and held it up before me for my admiration.

It was a sky-blue silk, very full in the skirt, and having a profuse quantity of snowy lace about the bosom of the low waist, and trimming the short, open sleeves. I exclaimed against the lowness of the waist, and the shortness of the sleeves, but my cousins laughed at me, and calling me a "little country prude," declared they were not going to allow such a neck and shoulders, and such a pair of arms, to be hidden from the gaze of admiration, even if I wished it, and then, having dissipated all my lingering objections by assuming dresses each made in the same style, we all descended to the drawing-room together, where we found my aunt and Percy waiting for us. I have never forgotten the thrill that swept over me when, accidentally meeting Dunbar's gaze, I read there such a feeling as I had never been conscious of having awakened before.

He was fastening the clasp of Carrie's cloak at the time, and had, I think, looked up at me accidentally. Quickly withdrawing his gaze, he continued his employment, but Mary's quick, bright, blue eyes had marked it all, and passing me, she whispered in my ear:

"He admires you intensely, Bessie, dear; I wouldn't wonder if he was half in love with you; but take care of your heart—he's not a marrying man, and *is* a most *awful* flirt, and though he is in love about a score of times every year, it doesn't last more than a week, or sometimes a month, so *do* take care, and *don't* fall in love with him, as he's bewitching as a syren when he pleases," and having finished fingering the pearls in my hair, which she had been all this time apparently arranging, Mary walked on, and took her fan from the table. At the same time the clasping and fastening of Carrie's cloak was completed, and as my cloak still lay folded across my arm, Percy came over and offered to assist me on with it.

Fortified by Mary's warning, though I flattered myself that I had not required it, I bowed, thanked him, and allowed him to take my cloak from my arm with quite an air of easy indifference that I had learned from my cousins. He gravely unfolded it, and then putting it upon my shoulders, he smoothed it down gently, and gathered it about me, but despite myself, I could not help a slight, incomprehensible trembling from passing over me when his warm, soft hand touched my throat, as he fastened the clasp of my cloak. I fancied his fingers were trembling, for it took some moments to complete the fastening, and as he looked up at me our eyes met a second time, and a second time I blushed.

The cloaking was done; we all put on rigolettes over our hair, and then descended the broad staircase together.

At the door Percy gave his arms to my aunt and Mary, and after they were seated in the carriage, he returned for Carrie and me.

On the way to the theatre we were all content to refrain from conversation and listen to Percy, who was one of the most brilliant men whom I have ever met. He had three favorite subjects of conversation—Art, Literature, and Politics. Just then he spoke on neither of these his favorites; he did not even speak of the great actress, though he had seen her frequently, and excelled in description. Instead of choosing any one subject in particular, he chose to be witty upon everything in general. How he jested and satirized, and how we, his four applauding listeners, laughed!

At length we were at the theatre.

The house was crowded in every tier, but fortunately he had procured a private box some nights previously, so that the crowd was of no consequence to us; and, after seating ourselves, I had only time to recover from the bewilderment, and, in a slight degree, from the pleasurable excitement, of the lights, the many brilliantly-dressed ladies, and the flashing of jewels in boxes and galleries, when the curtain rolled up on the first scene of the first act of *Macbeth.*

I hardly saw what passed in the first four scenes, so intent did I watch for the first appearance of the female "star," who does not enter till, as Lady Macbeth reading the letter, in the commencement of act fifth.

The effect of the first appearance of this great woman upon me I cannot well describe. I know I shivered throughout my entire body, and then sat, perfectly stilled, looking and listening. The deep, measured, but perfectly natural tones of her voice seem to echo in my ears to this day, and I remember that, when she came to that passage of the letter which reads: "They made themselves—air?" the manner in which the last word was pronounced—the astonished, questioning "air," having first paused some moments, and then pronounced it as if asking a question—so frightened me, that I almost started from my seat, and half fancied that I saw the real vanishing into air of the three witches upon the Heath of Fores.

Anything so magnificent as her appearance upon her second entrance I had never conceived in my wildest imaginings of grandeur. The rich, costly material of her robe, heavily embroidered with gold, might have made no insignificant part of a queen's wardrobe, I thought. The majesty of her bearing, the royal carriage of her head, and, above all, when, in welcoming Duncan, and replying to his salutation, she spread out the voluminous skirt of her robe, and courtesied till she was almost prostrate at his feet, made me think of the sun leaving his sceptre to bow to one of the lesser stars.

Percy stooped toward me, and whispered:

"It is the most magnificent dress that ever was seen upon a stage."

With that single exception, and, of course, between the acts, I don't think there was another word spoken from her first entrance till the curtain rolled down upon the close of the last scene of the play.

"Well?" said Dunbar, questioningly, to me, after the first burst of applause was over.

I only drew a long, full breath in reply. Besides being the first time I had ever seen the star," it was the first time I had ever been in a theatre, and my enjoyment of it all had been almost too intense.

"Can't you speak?" he asked, after a moment.

"Hardly; but I am *so glad* you didn't describe her to me as we were coming to the theatre."

"Why?"

"Oh, because it is a sin to mutilate anything so great, by description."

"So I judged, and I knew better than to do such an ungracious thing;" and then turning toward my aunt and cousins, he for some minutes addressed himself to them, till the lobbies were partially emptied. We then all left the theatre together.

Always keeping Mary's whispered and seriously spoken warning in mind, I meant never to fall in love with Percy, and thought myself safe so long as I never acknowledged even to myself that he was at all dear to me, though I couldn't but be conscious that my heart fluttered at the sound of his step on the stair, at each tone of his voice, when unexpectedly heard, and that I had learned to know his ring so well, that when the door-bell pealed forth, evening after evening, with that peculiarly musical vibration that only his application to it produced, I felt cheek, brow and neck flushing.

It was, indeed, impossible for me—young, inexperienced, and totally heart-free—to resist the resistless fascinations of this man. There was that in his voice, look, bearing, and bonny, blue eye that awakened my whole heart and soul to life. I think I loved him long before I was conscious of the nature of my own feelings; indeed, I know now that it was so.

One day I was in the parlor alone. Aunt and my cousins had both gone out shopping; and how it happened that I was left alone I hardly remember now, for I usually accompanied them on all such expeditions. Percy was announced, and entered, gay and smiling, handsome, bright, graceful and bewitching—for he had that sort of easy grace and witchery, fascination of eye and lip, that makes the finished coquette, either of man or woman; indeed, I have often thought that his coquettishness was more like that of a girl than that which characterizes the male coquette, and his pretty playfulness, his hundred "little winning ways," "so arch and wayward, wild and wilful," would have been absurdly foolish in another man; in him they were simply beautiful.

I had only time to recover from the delightful flutter which his arrival had put me into, when, entering, he came right toward me as I was about to rise, and waving me back, said:

"There, there, Miss Bessie, don't rise on my account. I do wish you would learn to treat me with less ceremony," and then taking the hand I offered him, he raised it to his lips with pretty gallantry.

He tossed his straw hat on to the table near me (for instead of leaving it on the hat stand in the hall, he had carried it in his hand into the room), and then seated himself on the sofa beside me.

I put down a paper which I had been reading, and the movement attracted his attention toward it.

"What have we here?" he asked, holding his hand out for it.

"Have you read that poem, 'Starry eyes?'"

"Yes, several times, I must confess."

"Isn't it pretty?"

"Yes, rather; not much of a poem, but as you have just said, 'pretty,'" he returned, with the air of a critic.

"Do read it, Mr. Dunbar, will you? You read so well, you know."

"Was the compliment thrown in by way of making me accede to your request? It would be too bad to refuse you after that," and glancing over the poem he read it.

I can't tell you how beautifully Percy used to read.

There was a melody and rythm in the intonations of his voice that played round the words like music as they issued from his lips, and the pupils of his eyes enlarged and dilated with a new and soulful light; his brow seemed to catch a halo from the very spirit of poesy, and even his hair was more golden and sun-tinted

"So you like this?" he asked when he had finished reading.

"Like it? Oh, I love it! I thought it was pretty before, but *now* I think it beautiful."

He smiled brightly.

"I'm glad it pleases you, because I wrote it for you."

"You *wrote* it, and for *me?*" I exclaimed in joyful amazement.

"Yes, I *wrote* it, and for *you*," and he laughed merrily.

"Are you a poet?"

"Of course."

"Dear me! I didn't know, Mr. Dunbar."

"Didn't you, though? Well, now, that's strange. I imagined it was written all over me, but I trust the discovery isn't going to make any difference; you haven't taken a sudden dislike to me on that account?"

"Now, Mr Dunbar, how absurd! I love poets."

"Do you, so? Then you love me?" he asked gaily.

"I didn't say that, indeed."

"Well, no matter—I love you, Bessie."

He laughed in saying it, but there was such a tender, serious light in his eyes, that I really thought he meant it, and I felt my cheeks growing crimson. In my confusion I took up his hat from the table, and putting it on, asked:

"What kind of a boy would I make? Look!"

"Charming. A prettier boy even than a girl, if that were possible; you would break hearts in all directions, but then you contrive to do that very well as it is."

I made some reply in the same vein, and we both, as if by mutual consent, kept from the ground on which we had been getting a few minutes before, and chatted without a moment's intermission for about half an hour, when he rose to go.

He lifted his hat from my head, and stooping a little, bent over me.

"Now do you know, little one, that you have been wearing my hat for half an hour, and you owe me a forfeit?" and he stooped down till his breath, warm and fragrant, fanned my cheek.

I never, never will forget that moment! I don't think there has been another so completely, intensely, rapturously happy in my whole existence, and that there never will be such another, I know only too well.

I didn't look up at him when he said "good morning." I was half afraid to let him see the happiness that flooded my eyes over; and so we parted. I remember how I blushed when I met him next, and how Aunt Maggie bestowed a quizzical look upon me, and after he was gone said, seriously:

"Now, indeed, Bessie, you must not go and lose your heart to Percy Dunbar. He is a terrible flirt, and roams about from one pretty girl to another, like a butterfly among flowers. He isn't a marrying man either; so don't go and fall in love with him; it will only make you miserable, and I won't have you made miserable."

I had rather she had struck me a blow on the head that would have laid me senseless at her feet.

And now I must hurry to the end, for the succeeding events came quick and fast, rapidly chasing each other.

One evening Percy and I chanced to be alone together, sitting on the sofa in the parlor. He took my hand and held it between his for a moment, and then he asked:

"Bessie, will you give me this little hand?"

And, almost choked, I answered:

"It is yours, Percy."

And once more he stooped over me and kissed me. After that it seemed to me that we were engaged lovers, though he said nothing of it to my aunt; and when he told me, as he often did, how dear I was to him, and how much he loved me, I did not hesitate to confess that I loved him equally well. And then, one day, there came a letter urging my immediate return home, because my father was ill; and I made ready to go on the next day. Percy came in the evening to bid me good-bye, and whispered to me that he would write often; and when we parted, once more, for the last time, he kissed me.

My father was already better when I arrived at home, and daily recovered health and strength till he was soon as well as ever.

The first week since my return passed away, and no letter from Percy; but I didn't think strange of that, because I thought, "he doesn't want to intrude upon me just now, not knowing yet that papa is quite well again;" but when, after sending the good news to Aunt Maggie, another week passed and no letter, I felt a strange, gnawing pain take hold of my heart as though something was eating it; but I still invented excuses. Then a third week—no letter. "Oh," I asked myself, "was Mary right, and does he really trifle thus with human hearts?" And still I could not believe it. I invented yet other excuses, and a fourth week passed, but still no letter from Percy. One from Mary came, and a single sentence in it froze my very blood, and turned it to gall.

"You see, Bessie, how fortunate it was that you didn't let your heart into the keeping of Percy Dunbar; he's in love again—this time with a magnificent Southern belle. What a terrible flirt he is!"

And I was forced to see that I had been only one of the many idols of the hour, but did that help me to love him less? No, oh no! It is so hard to *unlove* any one that has been so well loved as I loved Percy. My pride should have helped me? So it did—to conceal my grief like a canker-worm in my own heart, but not to love him less. I have never seen him since; but his blue eyes, his sweet voice, his young, bright, happy face are all as fresh in my memory as on the day I last saw him, and I love him as dearly as years ago—my Percy! my darling!

THE STEPMOTHER;

OR,

WHO'S TO WIN.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "RICHARD HOFFMAN," "STANFIELD HALL," "MINNIGREY," ETC. ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Who by repentance is not satisfied,
Is nor of heaven nor earth. SHAKSPEARE.

"My master, Richard Gaston," said the dying man, as soon as those whom he wished to hear his confession were assembled around his bed, "although the eldest of his grandsons, and heir to the baronetcy, was no favorite with Sir Edward, who disliked him on account of his ungainly appearance and want of resemblance to the family, which had long been remarked for extraordinary personal advantages; in fact, so much so, that 'Handsome as a Gaston' had become almost a proverb in the county. Barnard, the second brother, was the old man's idol; and there is little doubt that but for the title he would have settled his immense estates on him. There was the struggle—he was too proud to leave the representative of his name and race comparatively a beggar, Richard having but a small fortune in right of his mother.

"The poor young gentleman," continued Beckford, after pausing to gather strength, "passed but a dull time at Moultree, where Barnard was all in all. He could not even take a horse from the stable without asking the permission of his younger brother, which the latter frequently refused. I have heard him insultingly advise him to walk to see the hounds thrown off, or ride in one of the dog-carts with the keepers.

"As you may imagine, gentlemen, but little love existed between them."

"And was my father a witness to this unnatural treatment?" demanded the Templar.

"A witness, but not a sharer in it," replied the now penitent man. "He was a mere youth at the time—powerless to interfere."

"Thank Heaven!" murmured Edward Gaston.

"He loved his elder brother, and their mutual affection was the only consolation the unhappy Richard knew till he beheld Miss Stanley, the sister of the curate of Wicksal.

"I remember her—a pale, quiet, delicate-looking girl, who quitted the neighborhood immediately after the death of my master. It was reported," he added, "that she went to France."

Dr. Trevanion placed his finger upon his lips to impose silence, fearful lest the strength of his patient should be exhausted before the conference was complete.

"They were married," continued his patient, resuming the thread of his narrative; "the lady's brother performed the ceremony privately in Wicksal church."

At the word "married," Collin Craw clasped his hands in silent gratitude. Whatever might prove the result of the discovery, he would not have to blush for his mother.

"Whether my master's grandfather and brother Barnard entertained any suspicion of the fact or not, I never learnt; all I know is that violent quarrels took place between them, and that Mr. Edward Gaston was sent suddenly from Moultree, for taking part with Richard.

"Six weeks after the marriage," added Beckford, "the bridegroom was drowned whilst bathing in the lake."

There was a general silence. All who heard him feared the terrible revelation they suspected was about to follow.

Squire Beachum was the first to break it.

"Was your master alone when he met his death?" he asked.

"His second brother, Barnard Gaston, was bathing with him," was the reply. "I can give you no particulars," added the dying man, with a sigh, "for the unfortunate gentleman had sent me with his young wife to France. He deemed it more prudent she should reside there till he came of age and possessed of his mother's fortune."

"You were in France, then, when he died?" observed the Templar.

"Yes; at Tours, the other side of Paris. Mrs. Gaston had an aunt residing there. The news of her husband's death almost proved fatal to her. As soon as she had sufficiently recovered the shock to think of the future, she sent me to England, with a letter for her brother."

"You saw the Reverend Mr. Stanley, then?"

Beckford uttered a deep groan.

The question was repeated.

"The baronet's influence with the rector," he faltered, "had deprived the poor gentleman, whose health had always been delicate, of his curacy. He had removed to London, where he endeavored to support himself, as I heard, by writing for the newspapers. He did not suffer long; want and anxiety did their work speedily upon his already exhausted frame, and, a month after my return to Moultree, intelligence arrived of his death."

"But you saw him?" exclaimed Collin, greatly agitated, for, as the action of the lamentable drama was gradually unrolled, he felt himself its hero.

"I saw Barnard Gaston," replied the wretched man, in a tone of remorse; "listened to his tempting promises. He had all the wile of the serpent, and more than the serpent's venom in him. He proffered independence. I was poor, vain, and ambitious—servitude galled me; yet it was not without a pang that I yielded to his offers, betrayed the trust reposed in me, and gave him the letter Mrs. Gaston had entrusted me with for her brother."

Here the speaker became so exhausted that Dr. Trevanion was obliged to administer restoratives before he could proceed.

"Never shall I forget," he resumed, "the rage of old Sir Edward, and the disappointed looks of his grandson, when they discovered that the unfortunate lady was likely to become a mother. It was arranged between them that I should immediately return to France, announce her brother's death, and watch over her till the birth of the infant. But first they endeavored to ascertain from me whether any certificate of the marriage was in existence."

"And you betrayed the trust so solemnly reposed in you?" said Collin, in a tone of reproach.

"No," answered the dying man; "but I claim no merit on that account. It was prudence decided me to remain faithful, and guard the secret as a hold over them. I pleaded ignorance—adhered to it—swore to it; till they either believed, or affected to believe me."

"The proofs exist, then?"

"The curate made two certificates: one for the bridegroom, which, I have every reason to believe, fell, upon his death, into his grandfather's hands, and one for the bride."

"And no entry in the register of the church?" demanded Squire Beachum.

"Yes."

"It has been removed or effaced, then," observed Trevanion; "we searched them but yesterday."

"The leaf was pasted down," resumed Beckford, "next to the cover. I saw the curate do it with my own eyes, after the other witnesses who signed it had quitted the church."

"You were not the only witness, then?"

"No."

At this reply the countenance of Collin brightened.

"The housekeeper, Mrs. Squires, who had nursed Mr. Richard when a child, was present and signed the certificate. I have often wondered," added the speaker, "why Sir Barnard retained her in his service after the last proof, as he believed, had been destroyed. Most likely he thought it safest to do so."

The woman was immediately sent for. A violent tremor seized her when, on entering the room, she recognized the dying man. Conscience suggested that all was discovered.

"I know nothing! can tell you nothing!" she exclaimed, in reply to the first question put to her by Squire Beachum; "where is my lady? I must see her."

"You will never see your mistress again," replied the Templar, gravely, "unless at the bar of justice, to answer for her crimes."

"My lady in prison!" ejaculated the housekeeper, in a tone of surprise.

"She has fled from England to avoid one," said Trevanion. "It is only by answering truthfully that you can avoid the punishment she has escaped."

Mrs. Squires commenced wringing her hands, and looked imploringly at Edward Gaston, as if she expected that he would interfere in her favor.

"What could I do?" she sobbed. "I had eaten the bread of the family for years. Besides, who would have believed me? I had no hand in it. I only prepared the body for the grave. I loved him too dearly to have injured a hair of his head."

"Of whose head?" demanded Collin, greatly excited.

"Hush!" whispered his friends.

"The young squire's," answered the woman. "Besides, the marks upon the neck might have been made by human hands."

At this terrible confirmation of the suspicions all present entertained of the real cause of Richard's death, there was a general burst of execration.

"And the murderer—the fratricide—rests by the side of his victim," exclaimed Collin Craw; "mocking at human justice in his death. This infamous sacrilege shall not last. My rights once established, by heavens, I'll have the felon's corse dragged forth, and cast to fitting companionship."

"Who is that gentleman?" demanded the housekeeper, in a voice of terror.

"Sir Richard Gaston," replied Beckford, solemnly, "the son of the boy you nursed at your breast, the man whose marriage in Wicksal Church you were a witness to, whose murder you concealed."

The woman fixed her eyes upon Collin Craw, and continued regarding him with speechless surprise.

"I feel that my strength is going," continued the dying man; "let me complete the work of atonement ere it be too late. On my arrival in France," he continued, resuming his narrative, "I found my mistress plunged in poverty. Her aunt, the only relative besides her brother, had died suddenly, and the means of existence with her. I could not see her starve—no, bad as I was, and have been all my life, I was not such a brute as that, so I pretended to work for her, spending the money her enemies had provided me with, till her hour of trouble arrived, when she gave birth to a son. The English chaplain christened him, and three days afterwards the widowed mother followed her husband and brother to the grave.

"And the infant?" said the Templar, who had been writing down every word of the confession.

"My instructions were to leave him in one of the hospitals they have in France for foundlings," replied Beckford. "You have only to place a child in a sort of niche and ring the bell, when the machine turns round, and you see it no more. But, instead of carrying them out, I brought the boy to England, and, by bribing Humphrey Skillet, contrived to place him in the poor-house."

"Were you not afraid of discovery, so near to Moultree?" asked the squire.

"The nearer, the safer," murmured the dying man. "No one in the neighborhood suspected the marriage of his father; and Sir Edward and his unnatural uncle were both in London, where I speedily joined them, and received the reward of my villany. But it did not prosper with me," he added. "Nothing prospered that I undertook. I married—lost my wife, entered into business and became a bankrupt, all within a year."

"Heaven is just," observed the doctor.

"Well, I suppose it is," said the patient, in a tone that denoted his strength to be fast decreasing, "but Sir Barnard lived and died a wealthy man; I found him out, told him of my misfortunes, and he engaged me to travel with him. We visited France and Italy together; on our return to England, he married, and appointed me steward to his wife's property at Penswick."

Every formality that could give legal value to the confession of Beckford was gone through, signed, and attested by all who had heard it.

"I am going fast—fast!" he murmured, fixing his eyes upon Collin. "I should like—but I suppose it would be too much to ask—just to take the son of my old master by the hand, and hear him say that he forgave me."

Every eye was turned on Collin Craw, in whose breast a struggle was evidently taking place. His early years of suffering in the poorhouse, the brutal treatment of the master, and worse than all, the ignorance from which Providence had so wondrously snatched him, passed rapidly before his mental vision, and his heart felt as if it had been changed to iron. The next moment he saw only the penitent, suffering wretch, whose eyes were fixed imploringly upon his, and the better feelings of his nature prevailed.

"As freely as one human erring creature can forgive another," he replied, "I pardon you; for the rest address yourself to Him who judges alike men's crimes and his temptations."

"Thank you," gasped Beckford, faintly pressing the hand extended towards him. "I feel as if those words had relieved my soul of half its guilt. I had forgotten one thing," he added. "Sir Edward, fearing his race might become extinct, inscribed upon the back of the title-deeds of Moultree an acknowledgment of your father and mother's marriage. In the event of Barnard leaving issue, male issue, it would not be necessary to produce them. They are placed in—in——"

Here the sufferer fell back upon his pillow, and expired, muttering the words, "the casket—the casket!"

Edward Gaston was the first to congratulate his cousin on the brilliant prospects so unexpectedly opened to him.

"That I have no cause to blush for the mother who bore me," replied the newly-discovered heir of Moultree, "is indeed a source of happiness; for the rest I care but little—it brings with it bitter regrets."

"Regrets?" repeated his friends.

"You forget poor William," answered Collin, for so we shall continue to designate him, for the present.

"And do you think he will regret?" exclaimed the Templar.

"I fear so."

"You wrong him, then! upon my soul, you wrong him. I gave you credit for deeper knowledge of the human heart; William will rejoice at this discovery, provided it does not deprive him of your affection."

"If I could only think that," observed his friend, "it would remove a sad weight from my heart."

From the Hall Collin and his friends proceeded at once to search the register in Wicksal Church. Great was the astonishment of the rector when they pointed out the page that had been pasted down. That his former curate should have taken such a liberty as to celebrate the marriage without consulting him, roused the clerical bile, and he expressed his opinion of such conduct in terms savoring more of the high Churchman than of Christian charity.

"No wonder that the discipline of the Church is shaken," he observed, "when those who should uphold it betray their trust. The ceremony must have taken place after canonical hours. I am shocked, inexpressibly shocked at such want of respect to his superior."

"You are wrong, reverend sir," observed the housekeeper, meekly.

"Wrong, woman!" repeated the rector, angrily.

"They were married at daybreak. I was present, and ought to know."

"Is that your signature?" demanded the Templar, pointing to the name of Catherine Squires, written in small round hand, at the bottom of the page.

"I will swear to it," added the witness, firmly.

"Shocking, very shocking," muttered the still offended clergyman—"most irregular."

"*In a curate*," said Collin, sarcastically; "but what would it have been in a rector?"

"Sir!"

"I ask, how you would qualify the conduct of a rector—who, at midnight, and without the license of his bishop, celebrated a marriage in his church?"

At this question the reverend gentleman appeared slightly confused, and muttered something about circumstances changing cases.

"Does the rubric provide for any such contingency? I believe not; and when you recollect that out of canonical hours you yourself repeated the marriage ceremony between Captain Gaston and his late wife, prudence, if not charity, might teach you to speak less bitterly of the conduct of my uncle."

"Your uncle!" exclaimed the astonished rector.

"This gentleman," said Edward, "is the son of the late Richard Gaston and the sister of Mr. Stanley—consequently, the undoubted heir of Moultree."

Before the Churchman could recover his surprise, his visitors quitted the sacred edifice, and proceeded to Brook House, where William anxiously awaited their return.

To do Collin justice, he felt more sorow at the thought of the disappointment the discovery would inflict upon his ward than elated on his own account. During the years he had watched over him, the boy had wound himself like ivy round some solitary trunk around his heart. The hard-working, plodding lawyer had learnt to look upon him as his son; and William loved him with the affection of a child for a kind and indulgent father.

"I shall never have the courage to tell him," said the newly-discovered heir of Moultree, with a sigh. "You must inform him of the change in his late brilliant prospects."

This was addressed to Edward, who readily undertook the task. He judged the hero of our tale more justly than the speaker, for the simple reason that his feelings were not so deeply concerned.

As kindly as possible he discharged the painful duty. William heard him in silence, and, when the tale of crime and wonder was concluded, burst into a passionate flood of tears.

The Templar regarded him with surprise. Was it possible, he thought, that he had misjudged his disposition?

"You may rely," he added, willing to try him further, "upon the liberality of Sir Richard Gaston."

The youth shook his head impatiently.

"An ample provision, I doubt not, will be made for you—console yourself with the assurance."

"And what will console me for the loss of his affection?" demanded our hero, impatiently. "He will hate me—he must; and yet it is not my fault that my grandfather murdered——"

Sobs choked his utterance; he could proceed no further.

Collin, whose impatience could endure no longer, had advanced to the door of the library, and, on hearing the last words, entered the room. His ward sprang towards him, and would have fallen at his feet, had not his scarcely less agitated guardian caught him in his arms, and held him pressed closely to his heart.

"You will not hate me," exclaimed the excited boy, "you will not withdraw your love from me? You are too just, too good, to visit on my head the evil deeds of my grandfather—he would have taken my life as well."

"Hate you," repeated Collin, "never, never! My regret is that this discovery deprives you of a rank you are far more fitted to adorn than the poor parish drudge—of a fortune——"

"I loathe them both; rank and fortune would never have made me happy," interrupted the noble-hearted boy, "the memory of Hugh forbids it. My heart feels so much lighter now. You will forgive that I stood, even for an instant, between you and your just rights, and call me William again; I detest the name of Egbert; I have had nought but misery since I bore it."

"And so you feel no regret?" inquired his guardian, anxiously.

"None."

"Moultree is a noble inheritance."

"I prefer the inheritance of your affection," observed the youth; "there lies no untimely grave between it and my heart. I can enjoy it without a sigh, a regret, or a pang—from infancy it has been mine. I desire no other."

"Both shall be yours," exclaimed Collin, deeply gratified by the display of pure ingenuous feeling on the part of one he had watched over like a parent, "my affection whilst living, my fortune when I am dead."

"The first will suffice," observed his ward, with a faint smile; "the first will suffice."

Had his words been suggested by the most worldly cunning, instead of expressing the feelings of his truthful, manly heart, they could not have been better adapted to advance his interests with the undoubted inheritor of Moultree, who, had it been possible, would at once have suppressed the discovery of his own rights in favor of his adopted son.

But such a sacrifice could not be. The memory of the dead forbade it.

In the will which Lord Cheverly and Edward found, the widow of Egbert Gaston had bequeathed her fortune to her daughter Lydia, and named Maude her guardian—a trust which the peer at once accepted in the name of his wife, and took the orphan with him to London.

"We must not leave the last mystery unsolved," observed the Templar to Collin; "the instant we arrive in town the house in Oxford street shall come down. I will have it removed brick by brick, if necessary, till we find the casket."

"And when found we can examine it together," observed his friend.

"That task is yours," replied Edward, with a smile. "You forget I am but a collateral member of the family; you are the head of the Gastons."

"A sad heritage!" murmured the former; "a sad heritage!"

Little as Lord Cheverly respected the character of Lady Raymond, the awfully sudden death of her husband gave her a claim upon his humanity he was not the man to neglect or ignore, and, before quitting Moultree, he invited her to take up her abode for some time with her sister in London. To his surprise, and, perhaps, also to his satisfaction, the invitation was declined.

"I shall never see London again," observed the once giddy Laura; "certainly not by my own wish. It would renew too many painful recollections and reproaches. Henceforth," she added, "I am devoted to the only duty left me—the education of my children."

"A caprice!" thought the peer, as he quitted her.

He was mistaken: his sister-in-law kept her word, and passed the rest of her days in strict seclusion, drawing sweet lessons from adversity.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Over them sad Horror, with grim hue,
Did always soar, beating his iron wings;
And after him owls and night-ravens flew,
The hateful messengers of heavy things.
SPENSER.

On his arrival in town, Collin Craw—the world, as yet, knew him by no other name—was surprised to hear from his clerks that Mr. Smooth had called several times during the last few days, and expressed a particular wish to see him, but had declined stating his business either by message or by letter, merely observing that it was *private—strictly private*—and would be imparted to their principal alone.

The shrewd lawyer smiled; he guessed the nature of the communication he had to make; circumstances, however, had outbid him; the discovery was already made, and even had it been otherwise, Collin, as we have already seen, was not the man to tamper with justice to promote his own private interests.

He resolved, however, to see the gentleman whose celebrity in criminal cases he was perfectly well acquainted with.

The interview, as our readers may suppose, took place in the private office of Collin.

"I am engaged, Mr. Craw," observed his visitor, "in a rather interesting case—to defend a man who has hitherto borne an unimpeachable character in the world, but who now lies under the accusation of murder——"

"Say, rather, murders," observed his brother lawyer, drily.

"True; I have reason to suppose that you are right, although I have not seen the indictments yet. I believe we may say murders. Now, my client——"

"Humphrey Skillet."

"I prefer designating him as my client," replied Mr. Smooth; "he is in possession of circumstances that materially affect your future prospects in life."

"He has deceived you," observed Collin, with a smile.

His visitor shook his head, implying that he was not a person easily to be deceived.

"At least," added the speaker, "if he has told you that he possesses any information of an exclusive character."

"The subject is rather a delicate one," said the agent of Humphrey Skillet. "Shall we speak plainly?"

"As plainly as you please," was the reply.

"I believe you passed a portion of your life in the—in an establishment under the direction of my client?"

"I thought we were to speak plainly?" replied his brother lawyer.

"Yes; certainly, certainly!"

"Then why not say the workhouse?"

"Because," answered Mr. Smooth, "I did not wish to wound your feelings by alluding more pointedly than was necessary to a subject which, in your present position, must be a painful one."

"Not in the least," exclaimed Collin, coolly.

"So eminent in the profession, too."

"I am about to abandon it."

"And quit the common law for the bar; right, very right, my dear sir. I predict your success, in fact, shall be most happy to promote it. But to the purport of my visit."

"If you please."

"My unfortunate client," continued his visitor, "can give you the clue to discover your parents."

"Indeed!"

"No doubt upon the point."

"Suppose it to be a point upon which I am not curious," observed Collin.

"But they are rich."

"Did he name them?"

"No, that he is unable to do. But he can name the person, the confidential agent of a *great man*, who brought you an infant to the workhouse."

"Beckford. Pray proceed."

Mr. Smooth looked rather blank on hearing the name, and hesitated.

"Or, rather," added the speaker, "let me spare you the pain, and proceed for you. I was, as you say, brought to Wicksal poorhouse by the agent of a great man, and left there; but that great man had not the slightest suspicion of the conduct of the person in whom he trusted, or the probabilities are I should not be now living to address you."

"Indeed!"

"He believed me abandoned in one of the numerous hospitals for foundlings in France."

The lawyer looked professionally shocked.

"Neither my uncle, who called himself Sir Barnard Gaston, nor Humphrey Skillet, had the least idea the real heir of the baronetcy and estates was a pauper boy—the drudge, the victim of the workhouse."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Smooth; "the paragraphs in the papers, then, apply to you?"

"They do."

"And this Beckford——"

"Has confessed everything," replied Collin. "You perceive, therefore, how utterly valueless are the offers of your respectable client."

"I fear so."

Greatly disappointed in the result of his visit, Mr. Smooth took his leave, and that same evening started by mail to communicate the unfavorable intelligence to Humphrey, whom he had persuaded to confide to him the nature of the secret in which he placed his last hope of safety. Before quitting London, he left instructions with his clerks to forward any information they might glean respecting the transactions that had lately taken place at Moultree.

The following day a numerous body of workmen surrounded the house in Oxford street with a screen of planks, and the demolition of the building commenced. Cis and her husband, for so many years the faithful guardians of the place, remained day and night upon the watch, and only taking repose when Edward Gaston or Collin Craw were present.

We shall see, eventually, with what result. The thread of our narrative, at present, takes us to the prison of the master of Wicksal poorhouse, who, during the absence of his lawyer, endured the greatest of all torments—suspense.

"At last!" muttered the wretched man, when he saw Mr. Smooth enter his cell. "I thought you had forgotten me, though you have drawn hundreds from me."

"The law is expensive," observed the gentleman, blandly.

"Expensive," repeated the prisoner; "say ruinous! grasping! merciless! but I care not for the money; have you seen Collin?"

"I have seen him."

"Well, don't measure out your words—were every one you utter a pearl, it has been paid for. He consents? I knew he would—felt sure of it! he is not such a fool as to prefer useless revenge to fortune. I have been too easily frightened. Can't you speak?" he added, nervously.

"Mr. Craw knows everything already."

"Impossible!"

"Beckford has confessed more, even, than you suspected—that he is the son of Sir Barnard's elder brother, who was drowned; the proofs, from all I can learn, are indisputable. He will be Sir Richard Gaston."

At this intelligence Humphrey Skillet felt struck as if by a thunderbolt, and his head sank upon the table before him.

"Had you confided in me before Beckford made his confession," said the lawyer, "the result might have been different."

"What, then, becomes of me?" demanded his client, hoarsely.

Mr. Smooth looked like a man who felt exceedingly embarrassed how to reply.

The question was repeated.

"I can give no opinion—that is, no decided opinion—till after the trial; and the trial, you know, my dear sir, must have taken place under any circumstances. The law presents so many chances, and you have secured such excellent counsel. After the trial," he repeated, "I shall be enabled to speak with certainty."

"No doubt," replied Humphrey, bitterly, "no doubt."

"You really must collect yourself."

"*I feel I must*," said the wretched man, "now more than ever. The trial—when will it take place?"

"The assizes are fixed for June."

"I shall be prepared."

"Quite right, my dear sir; quite right. Nothing like nerve on these occasions. It does me good to hear you speak so firmly. Have you any further instructions to impart to me?"

"No."

"I should have thought you had," observed the lawyer, speaking very deliberately.

His client raised his head from the table, and gazed upon him with a vacant, hopeless stare.

"In these cases," continued Mr. Smooth, "there is always the possibility of an unpleasant termination. I have known juries difficult, very difficult to be convinced of the innocence of a prisoner. I speak in the interest of your family."

"I have no family."

"Friends, then."

"I have no friends."

It was a dreadful truth he uttered. The wretched man had lived, like the wolf, at war with humanity, and had not a being in the world to regret him.

"I am fearful you do not understand me," observed his legal adviser, after several minutes' silence; "after having been for so many years in the confidence of Sir Barnard Gaston."

"Curse him!" ejaculated Humphrey despairingly, "curse him! He has brought me to this."

"Intrusted by him with so many important affairs," continued Mr. Smooth, without heeding the interruption, "it is only natural to suppose that a person of your frugal habits must have accumulated a considerable property."

"What of it?" demanded his client, fiercely.

"Only that, unless disposed of previous to a conviction, in the case of anything unpleasant, it would go the Crown."

"Take it all," shrieked Humphrey, "only let me live; I can work for more. Contrive some means for me to escape. I will pay my gaolers—pay them richly. I dare not face my trial. I know all about it. I shall be watched, day and night, till——. It will be too late then," he added, with a shudder.

"Too late for what?"

"Nothing. To dispose of my money as—as you advised me."

"Very true."

"Of course," added the lawyer, "if you can avoid the trial, it will be the shortest and *best* way of terminating the affair. I shall see you in the morning," he added, rising to depart, "and will take any instructions respecting——"

"It shall perish with me," interrupted the prisoner, vehemently, "it shall perish with me."

"As you please," said the legal adviser, as he took his leave. "I shall be with you again to-morrow early."

Humphrey Skillet smiled bitterly, and for more than an hour after his departure continued to pace the narrow limits of his cell, one moment tossing his arms wildly in the air and cursing his evil destiny, the next yielding to the most abject despondency. As the hour of locking up the prisoners for the night approached, he became somewhat calm, and listened anxiously for the steps of the turnkey.

The man made his appearance at last—a tall, thin, wiry looking fellow, with great expression of cunning about his eyes.

At the period we are writing of prison discipline was conducted on a very different system from the present day; or rather, no system at all. Gaolers exercised just as much or little discretion as they thought fit, and money could procure almost any indulgence.

"Have you brought the light?" demanded the murderer.

The turnkey placed one upon the table.

"Have you thought over my offer?"

"Which?"

"The escape, Bayles, the escape!"

The person thus designated, shook his head.

"I should be willing enough," he replied in a whisper, "but it is impossible. I have turned it over a hundred times in my head—looked at it every way. Jack and the porter both sleep in the lodge; and the governor takes his rounds the last thing."

Humphrey Skillet clasped his hands in despair.

"Why not stand your trial?" added the speaker.

"I dare not," groaned the wretched man, "I dare not."

"Well, I suppose there aint *much chance*," observed the turnkey, philosophically; "still, you can but risk it."

"I tell you that I dare not," exclaimed the prisoner, impetuously. "And yet it is not death I fear; it's being led out—the sun shining perhaps, and the birds singing as I used to hear them when a boy—strange that I should think of such things, isn't it?—and the thousands of faces with curious eyes turned towards me—that's what I dread. I shouldn't so much mind dying here in my cell, alone."

Bayles looked round the cold, naked space inclosed by granite walls, and shuddered.

"It must come to that at last," added the speaker. "Have you brought it?"

The man, with an air of reluctance, drew from his vest a phial, and held it up to the light.

"Are you sure it is the real thing?"

"I took it from the doctor's surgery myself," replied the official. "Opium—I know it too well to be mistaken. I was six months in a chemist's shop in London when a boy."

"Give it me."

"I must have the money first."

Humphrey Skillet tore open his vest, and took from a side pocket in the lining a bank of England note.

It was the last he possessed.

The exchange was instantly made, and the turnkey quitted the cell, locking the door carefully after him.

"So," muttered the wretch—who, in addition to crimes with which his soul was already burdened, contemplated rushing into the presence of his offended Maker—"this is the end of all my fine spun calculations. I thought to close my days in ease, luxury and independence, instead of which I end them here. It's better than the rope and the crowd."

He raised the phial as he spoke, and regarded it attentively.

"Collin, heir of Moultree! and that I should never have suspected it. They will talk of him and of me for many a year to come, in Wicksal.

"I am prating like a boy," he exclaimed with sudden energy, "dallying with time—playing at bopeep with death. No; they shan't say I was a coward, after all—that the grasp of the hangman finished me."

He raised the phial to his lips, and drained off the contents.

No sooner was the fearful deed accomplished, than the fictitious courage which had hitherto supported the murderer of Bella, gave way, the King of Terrors stared him in the face, and he howled and wept with fear.

"Idiot!" he screamed, "why did I not take the chance of a trial? I should, at least have lived a week or two longer, perhaps months, who knows—now the grave—grave, and not one hour given to repentance. It may not be too late," he added, springing towards the door of his cell and calling for help.

The sullen echoes of the vaulted passage into which it opened, alone replied to him in his despair; he attempted to force back the bolt of the ponderous lock, and thrust his fingers into the interstices between the door and the wall till they bled.

In pity to our readers, we must draw a veil over the last appalling scene of the murderer's existence, who died as he had lived, violating laws both human and divine.

On the following morning, just as Mr. Smooth was setting forth from the hotel to visit his client, a letter from his clerk in London was put into his hands. The writer had heard of the death of Andrews, the locksmith. The principal witness against the master of the poorhouse was removed.

"I shall bring him off yet," exclaimed the lawyer, rubbing his hands with satisfaction, "remarkable case if I do—add to my reputation wonderfully."

On reaching the prison, instead of being conducted to the cell, he was shown into the room of the Governor, where several of the visiting magistrates were assembled.

To his great astonishment, Mr. Smooth found himself suspected of having procured his client poison.

"Ridiculous, gentlemen! My answer is, that such a supposition is simply ridiculous. I sell law, not poison. The proof that I did not consider my client's case as desperate, will be found in this letter.

"The prinbipal witness against him is dead. The poison must have been supplied by some one in the prison."

Here one of the turnkeys was observed to turn pale; and the surgeon who was present, quitted the room.

In a few minutes he returned.

"It is true," he said. "This gentleman is perfectly innocent. The means of death have been surreptitiously taken from the surgery."

"Who had the key?" inquired one of the magistrates.

"Bayles."

"I never touched the opium——"

The fellow paused, but it was too late, the word had escaped him, and, not having been previously named, fixed the crime unmistakably upon him.

The suspicion against the lawyer was at once dismissed.

"Foolish fellow!" said Mr. Smooth as he took his seat in the mail to return to London; "I positively never will despair of a case again, however desperate. Had he lived, ten to one but my precious client would have escaped."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A HUGE panther came prowling around the outskirts of Kingston, Cal., a short time since, to the great discomfort of the women and children, but he was soon shot and his dead body exhibited to the perturbated little ones; he measured nearly twelve feet in length, and would have made sad work with the inmates of any family at whom he might have got a fair chance.

THISBE.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

I, Thisbe, waiting in the roseate pause
Of this Assyrian twilight, thro' the stops
Of my sweet reed, O Pyramus, for thee
Breathe the impassioned languishment of love.
Haply, if thou, by some dim, devious path,
Sodden with flowers, and roofed by ancient palms,
Art dallying dreamful, down the glimmering way
Of old Euphrates; haply, my pleading song,
Broken to tenderest murmurs by my sighs,
May swim the silent current of the winds
To meet and circle thee, my best beloved,
As roseleaves, on this palace garden-brook,
Breeze-wafted, strand upon the grand, white isle
Of a great lotos-flower, among her dreams,
And odorous longings for her lord, the Nile.

Haste, my sweet Pyramus! the rosy blush,
Enamored Phœbus' burning kisses left
Upon the virgin cheeks of dusky Eve,
Hath slowly faded from her quiet face.
And, like a vestal wandering from her shrine,
With flaming censer, fann'd by musky winds,
Lighting her steps along the dark'ning groves,
Young Twilight, from the temple of the Sun,
Along the cloudy corridors of Night,
Hastening downward, bears the Evening Star!

Oh, my beloved! the pale minarets
Of Babylon's thousand glorious Fanes arise,
Like gods, above the altars of the World,
Lifting their ancient foreheads to the stars,
Crown'd with the aureole of the Moon's white fire.

Why tarriest thou, oh Pyramus, my love!
Lo! at our olden tryst I wait thee, sweet,
Where, veiled in glimmering mists of falling foam,
Kneels the pale genius of these whispering groves,
Our fountain—weeping Amphrodite, girdled
With dripping seaweed, and the sad-voic'd shells,
Those mournful minstrels of the wandering sea,
Whose fitful music mingles with my sighs,
Faint as the dimmest tune the south winds play,
Sailing across some visionary lake
Haunted by lilies in the moonlit spring.

And still thou lingerest, oh, my life, my love!
From the rose-thickets, ripples like a brook
The Bulbul's passionate joy, thrice multiplied
By pining echo, of these murmuring shades—
Sweet ghost that walks the shadowy woods alone,
Hapless for lost Narcissus evermore!

A rustling whisper of the orange boughs,
A deep'ning blush runs reddening o'er the roses,
The fountain plashes her white feet among
The breathless lilies, lapt in misty foam,
Soft ringlets blow against my cheek—an arm
White as the foam or lilies, clasps my neck—
A honied lip smothers me with its sweets—
Oh, Pyramus, my darling; it is thou! * * * *

INHERITED WEALTH.

A STORY FOR PARENTS.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Timothy Chandler was five-and-thirty years of age, and he had a wife and four children. His oldest child was a boy, fourteen years old—for Tim. had married young,—while his youngest was a girl of six. His wife was one of those busy, tidy, loving women, who seem raised up by Heaven to show to a degenerate age, how much the wife and mother can do towards making fireside heavens on earth. Tim was a cooper by trade, and no man could have asked for a better business than he had it in his power to command. And Tim was one of those kind-hearted, generous, free-spoken, impulsive men, who can so easily engage the love and esteem of their fellows.

But Tim had faults. He had some very bad faults. He was a discontented mortal; and he was a convivial mortal. He envied those who possessed more worldly wealth than did he; and he spent a large portion of his own effects in the company of riotous companions. In short, Tim. was becoming intemperate. It was to be seen in the unsteadiness of his step; in the unnatural flush of his cheek; and in the dying light of his once clear, bright eye. And, alas! it was to be seen in his once happy home—but happy not now. It was to be seen in the fading of the bloom upon his wife's fair cheek; in the tears that stole down her drooping lashes; in the sighs that broke from her heaving bosom; and in the look of deep unrest that often dwelt upon the faces of his elder children. And it could be seen, too, in the foot-marks of a desolation that was beginning to creep around the cottage.

"Timothy," said his wife—it was early in the morning, before the children were up—"Joseph and William must have some warmer clothing. The ground is beginning to freeze and they suffer."

"That's easier said than done," replied Tim, in a rough, uneasy way. "They'll have to wait till I can make a raise. Confound it! why was not I born as other folks are born? Why wasn't good luck in my star? Why wasn't there a fortune left to me by wealthy parents?"

The wife made no response. This was her husband's envious hobby. When he felt the need of money he invariably found fault with his Fate.

"Look at Stiles," he continued, growing more bitter; "and look at Butler; and at Crane;—see how they live. They had money left to 'em. They inherited wealth from their parents. They don't have to work, and dig, and be dunned for what they can't afford. Curses on this poor luck, I say!"

Hannah Chandler could not help speaking what she felt. She had heard this same complaint so often and had tried to cheer her husband so much, that she felt like telling him the truth.

"Timothy," she said, in the kindest way, but yet with firmness, "you do wrong to talk so; you do wrong to allow your thoughts to flow in that direction. Instead of looking at those who are pecuniarily better off than you are, why not look upon those who are worse off. Instead of mourning for what you cannot possess, why can't you think of what you might possess if you would?"

"Well—what might I possess?" asked Tim, abruptly.

"You might possess enough. There is no mechanic in this town with a better trade. You might possess enough to make your home a comfortable and a happy one. O, my husband, listen to me," she cried, with her folded hands upon her bosom. "You are making us all very unhappy!—you are making us all very miserable. Your children feel it. In the street they hear your name coupled with unholy things. They bow their heads in shame—in a shame which their father——"

Without allowing his wife to finish the sentence, Timothy Chandler started from his chair, and seized his hat, and went out into the shed, where he busied himself in working up some odd bits of wood until the children were up, and breakfast was ready. And this was the way he always did. He had not yet come to treating his wife with much harshness; but he would not listen to her when she spoke of his faults. When breakfast was over he went forth to his shop; but the words of his wife were not forgotten. He could not so easily put them from him. He could not hide from himself the fact that his children were suffering; but unfortunately, the presence of this fact did not lead him into a healthful state of mind. It made him fret, and he straightway laid it upon the shoulders of Stiles, and Butler, and Crane, who had been born with fortunes.

As time wore on Tim. Chandler became worse instead of better. His wife suffered more, and his children suffered more; and he, too, suffered more. His shop was much of the time neglected, and his income was so small that he had none for his home. His wife worked hard with her mop and her needle, while he spent a great part of his time at the village tavern. And as Hannah Chandler sat by her work-table during those long winter evenings, with her children crawling close to the fire to warm their shivering bodies, she prayed continually for her wayward husband.

One night—or rather, one evening—Tim. sat in the barroom of the tavern. He had drunk but little that day, for he had no money, and he had not yet fallen so low as to get trusted for his rum. His appetite for the exciting beverage was keenly active, and he was waiting for some of his friends to come in, in hopes that they would ask him to drink. He had asked them so many times—he had spent so much for rum for others—that he looked now for a return of the favor.

The bar-room was of a moderate size, with a deep, broad fireplace standing out from the wall, and in the recess beyond the chimney was a wooden bunk, upon which the hostler slept during the few hours of night that he had for rest. Upon this bunk was an old buffalo robe, and upon that buffalo robe was Tim. reclining. As he thus quietly reclined, two gentlemen, who had reached the inn at a late hour, and had had a supper ordered for themselves, entered and took seats near the fire. They did not notice the man upon the bunk, and when the landlord went out, which he did shortly after they came in, they evidently thought that they were the sole occupants of the place.

"Webber," said one of the gentlemen, after a silence of some moments ensued between them, "before we went in to tea you asked me to drink."

"Yes, Carleton—I did."

"And I refused."

"I remember."

"Well," said he who had been called Carleton, "since you asked me to drink with you, and I have refused, I feel that I may tell you why I did so."

Webber threw the stump of his cigar into the fire, and then remarked—

"Tell me by all means. I remember that we used to take a glass together before you moved away from our town, though not often."

"I never drank much," resumed Carleton; "and finally I quit it entirely. I'll tell you how it was. It was a very simple affair; but still, in our journey through life we shall find that circumstances, very trivial in themselves, sometimes exert wonderful influences over us. My parents were very poor, as you must remember; but they left me with a fair education, and many good lessons of life. As I grew up I longed to be rich. Close by me lived John Boynton. He had inherited great wealth from his parents, and flourished in grand style. I envied John Boynton. When I thought how easily he came by his money, I was almost disheartened at my own prospect; and very often I found myself complaining because my parents had not left me something with which to make a start in the world. I married, and went into business; but the old complaint was upon me. I dreamed of Aladdin's lamp, and of the magic ring, and spent half my time in wishing that I had them; and during all this time I was in the habit of using intoxicating drink. I didn't drink much, though I often drank more than I ought.

"Well, one day I picked up a paper from my native town, and saw therein that John Boynton was dead. Aye—more than that: he had died poor and degraded, and his children were left entirely destitute. Their mother had died of a broken heart a year before! And this was the end of a man whom I had so envied. His wealth was all gone—he was gone—and all that his children could inherit from him would be shame and sorrow.

"I went home and reflected. I saw my wife and children sitting by the hearth, and I fancied that I could detect lines of sorrow upon their faces. I walked out into the pale moonlight, and my thoughts came down to a plain, practical issue. I asked myself: Shall I have an inheritance to bequeath to my children? When I am gone, shall those loved ones inherit anything from their father which shall be of value to them in their great work of life? And I said to myself: I may not leave them money—I may not store up for them a hoard of material wealth; but I can leave for them that which is better: I can leave to them a father's name unsullied; a father's honor untarnished; and a father's LIFE after which they may copy with safety.

"I went back to my home, firmly resolved in my new course. I kissed my wife and children; and when I had retired, I prayed that God would give me strength. And from that moment I have not faltered. I cast away the cup and its associations forever; I ceased to envy those who might be richer than myself; and am now at work, with hand and heart and soul, to lay up for my children an inheritance which cannot be lost to them by any revulsion of earthly fortune. Now you know why I refused to drink with you. And surely you forgive me."

"More, more than that," cried Webber, reaching forth his hand. "I forgive you; and I bless you for the lesson. From this time forth I am with you. The last cup has been pressed to my lips—the last convivial hour is passed. Here, in this warm grasp, is my pledge!"

The host came in, and the two guests arose and left the room. In a little while Tim. Chandler glided down from the bunk, and moved towards the door. In the entry he met a number of his boon companions, who were just in for a time.

"Hi-lo! where now, Tim? Come—join us. What'll ye have?"

"Not now—not now," replied Tim.

"Then come and take a glass."

"No—not now."

And with this Tim. Chandler hurried out of doors. The snow-track was hard and smooth, and the air was sharp and cutting. But Tim. noticed not the cold. He walked slowly, thoughtfully on, ever and anon muttering to himself, with his head bowed, and his hands clenched. Finally, when he had come within sight of his own cottage, he stopped, and spoke aloud. He had been thinking deeply, calmly, and solemnly, and his decision had been arrived at with clear comprehension and firm purpose.

"Tim. Chandler can leave his children an inheritance!" he said, with his feet planted firmly, his swelling breast thrown nobly out, and his head proudly erect. "These arms are stout; this heart is strong; and this brain can be clear again. As God lives, and suffers me to live, my children shall have an inheritance which will not cause them to blush for the father who left it!"

Carlton had made one convert that night of whose existence, even, he did not know.

Timothy entered his house, and sat down by the fire. His wife was alone, and had been weeping. He dared not speak then, but suffered her to retire with the weight of sorrow still upon her. And Hannah Chandler slept, and dreamed, and did not dream of the angel that had come to her home.

In the morning Timothy was up first. When his wife came out he had a warm fire built, and the tea-kettle on. She looked into his face, and, through the blur and the cloud, came a light which had been long hidden, gleaming upon her like golden rays from the morning sun, penetrating to her soul as did the old love-light in the years agone. While yet she stood, gazing upon him like one in a dream, he reached forth and took both her hands.

"Hannah," he said, with voice as strong and firm as man ever spoke, and in tones as true and tender as were those which fell from his lips before the altar, "from this hour I begin to make an inheritance for my children. It may not be money—it may not be material wealth; but, if I live, it shall be an inheritance which they shall not blush to own in the years to come. It shall be a FATHER'S NAME unsullied; a FATHER'S HONOR untarnished; a FATHER'S EXAMPLE which may be safely followed! Help me in the work, Hannah. Love me as you ever have; and trust me as you would trust your own soul. And may God bless and keep us to the end!"

And did Hannah help him? Oh! how she loved and cheered him!—how she clung to him, and blessed him! How bright was the heaven of that home!—how sweet the music of its angel voices!

And Timothy Chandler went forth to carve out the inheritance for his children. His arm was strong, and so was his heart. His soul was firm, and so was his purpose. The years crept on apace, and the frost of age was upon his brow as white as snow. His work was done, and he sat down in the evening of life, by his Hannah's side, to rest and repose. He had carved out the inheritance, and he lived to see his children, and his children's children enjoy it. As father, and as grandfather, he was tenderly loved and worshipped; and as friend and citizen he was honored and respected; while, as counsellor and guide, to the young and to the middle-aged, none stood higher than did he.

Timothy Chandler had not been able to lay up much money for his children; but did he not give to them for an inheritance something of far greater worth—something nearer the worth of heaven? Ah—did he not?

HOME IS WHERE THERE'S ONE TO LOVE US.

Home's not merely four square walls,
  Though with pictures hung and gilded;
Home is where Affection calls—
  Filled with shrines the Heart hath builded!
Home!—go watch the faithful dove,
  Sailing 'neath the heaven above us,—
Home is where there's one to love!
  Home is where there's one to love us!

Home's not merely roof and room,
  It needs something to endear it;
Home is where the heart can bloom:
  Where there's some kind lip to cheer it!
What is home with none to meet?
  None to welcome, none to greet us?
Home is sweet—and only sweet—
  Where there's one we love to meet us!

SAVING.

A man is very apt to deceive himself into an idea that he *cannot* save, and that it is of no use attempting it. He convinces himself that his income is little enough for present necessities, and puts off the hope of accumulation, if he forms it at all, to that happy period when he shall be in somewhat better circumstances. His circumstances *do*, perhaps, improve; but his wants have extended as much, and still the time for saving is far ahead. Thus he goes on and on, resolving and re-resolving, until he is at last surprised by some sudden calamity which deprives him even of his ordinary earnings, or by death, which cruelly cuts him off in the very midst of the best intentions in the world.

Did any man, we would ask, ever experience a falling off in his income, even to so small an amount as a dollar in the week? Many answer they have. Did they continue to live at that reduced rate? They reply, We did so—we were compelled to do it. Very well; and pray what is the difference between being compelled to live a dollar a-week cheaper, and compelling yourself to do it? Or suppose stationary wages and a rising produce-market. Did you not find, that, though bread rose a penny a loaf, and other provisions in proportion, you still contrived to make your income procure something like the usual exhibition of victuals? You answer, Yes. And where, I would ask, is the difference between spending a small extra sum upon certain articles of food, and laying it by for accumulation, supposing it not to be so needed? It is clear, that, if you had the fortitude and strength of character to make the saving as much a matter of compulsion as the other circumstances are, you *would* save. You have, therefore, no excuse to present for your *not* saving, except that you are too weak-minded to abstain from using money which is in your power.

LOVE LIGHTENS TOIL.

How easy it is to work when we are happy! How delightful, when we are happy, to work for those we love.

A life of constant toil, merely for subsistence, is very hard and sad. No heart can bear it. The strain will break the courage and sour the temper of anybody. There *must be*, before the worker, some better reward than the supply of his mere physical wants, or he will become a discontented being.

He must work for *love* more than for *money*, or he is miserable. The thought of loving hearts at home nerves the strong arm of the man at his toil, and sends the warm blood singing through his heart. The wife, in her household labor, is happy, thinking of the evening hour, when she may sit down with her husband and be rewarded by his loving companionship for all that, during the day, she accomplishes or endures for him and her little ones.

She knows not how hard she works, so long as she is happy in *him*. She would, if need were, kill herself with hard labor for his sake, and not dream that she was dying. And he, if a true man, would do the same for her. For what do warm, fond hearts know of how much they endure for each other?

"Why," say they, "the more the better. It is for love—for *love*."

What kitchen under ground, what back attic, seven stories high, is dreary enough to darken the face of the maiden, working to make ready for her lover's visit. No one ever saw a place that could do it. Under the excitement of love, especially of love *requited*, wonders of work, otherwise impossible, have been accomplished; and so it will be again, and the worker hardly know that he has been tasked.

◆

AVOID DECEPTION.—Persons who practise deceit and artifice always deceive themselves more than they deceive others. They may feel great complacency in view of the success of their doings; but they are in reality casting a mist before their own eyes. Such persons not only make a false estimate of their own character, but they estimate falsely the opinions and conduct of others. No person is obliged to tell all he thinks; but both duty and self-interest forbid him ever to make false pretences.

◆

ONE half of mankind pass their lives in thinking how they shall get a dinner, and the other in thinking what dinner they shall get; and the first are much less injured by occasional fasts than are the latter by constant feasts.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THREE GIRLS.—You must use your eyes, your tongues, and your faculties of invention, in order to acquire a knowledge of "how to dress." You can question your dressmakers and milliners, observe the different styles of dress, and exercise your skill in combining colors and fabrics harmoniously. A writer of taste and observation says, "As you look from your windows, in Paris, observe the first fifty women who pass; forty have noses depressed in the middle, a small quantity of dark hair, and a swarthy complexion, but then what a toilet! Not only suitable for the season, but also *for the age and the complexion of the wearer*. How neat the feet and hands! How well the clothes are put on, and, more than all, *how well they suit each other!*" There, young ladies, you have a key to the "art of dress;" and a great art it is, and one in which every woman should be well versed, particularly those of slender means. For a lady who thoroughly understands the art can dress with more taste and make a better appearance on a small income, than a bungler can on thousands. It is pretty generally agreed that before American women can dress *perfectly*, they must have the taste of the French, especially in color. Too many of our ladies pay no regard to the harmony of colors in their attire, and consequently they never look well-dressed. When they go shopping, they buy whatever *singly* strikes the fancy, without regard to its effect in combination with other articles purchased, or with such as they may already have at home. A lady should *study her own style*, and dress accordingly, and not permit her dressmaker to array her in attire totally unsuited to her age, habit, and complexion, simply because everybody else wears the same kind and style of dress. There are persons who cannot dress tastefully, because they lack that exquisite refinement in whose atmosphere alone the delicate flower—taste—can live. As to what colors go best together, and what color each complexion requires, we answer that white and black are safe colors to wear, but the latter is not favorable to dark or pale complexions. Pale blue goes well with scarlet; pink with black or white; gray with scarlet or pink; green with violet, and cold with dark crimson or lilac. A cold color generally requires a warm tint to give it life. Gray and pale blue, for instance, do not combine well, both being cold colors. Pink is to some skins the most becoming, but should be shunned when there is much color in the cheeks or lips, or the slightest suspicion of red in either hair or complexion. Maize is very becoming to persons with dark hair and eyes; and peach color is perhaps one of the most elegant colors worn. But whatever the colors or the quality of the fabrics, the good or bad effect, the elegance or dowdiness, depends on the harmony of the combinations and the perfectness of the details. One incongruous color or article will spoil the effect, just as one wrong ingredient will spoil a chemical compound. You should, therefore, study the effect of color, and learn thoroughly what fabrics go best together. Rich brocades and cheap laces, for instance, will never do. Let the different articles harmonize in quality and price as well as in color and texture. The bonnet, or the ornaments in the hair, must also correspond with the general effect of the dress.

AMICUS.—We are decidedly on your side of the question in dispute. A young man who has *ever* shown a marked propensity for drink, no matter how thorough his reform appears to be, no matter what his protestations or his prospects, is one to whom we would never willingly confide a daughter's or a sister's happiness. The young man mentioned by you is no doubt sincere in his promises. It is not his *desire* to live soberly that we doubt—all drunkards have that desire—but it is his *power* to do so. Already he has once relapsed, though engaged to be married. What hope have you that when married, he will not be drawn into his old habits? For such a young man we feel nothing like enmity or contempt; we would render him any service in our power. But when he asks the hand of a lady in marriage, we say, NO; the risk is too awful, the possible consequences are too terrible. Our conviction on this subject is so strong, that nothing less than seven years of absolute sobriety, without a single relapse, would induce us to admit that a lady might so much as consider an offer of marriage from a man who had been three times drunk in all his life. This opinion will be concurred in by every man, every woman and every child, who has ever had an opportunity of observing, even from a distance, that most dreadful of all scenes—A DRUNKARD'S HOME.

WEBSTER.—We are not prepared to say that it is wrong for one who is a member of a church to marry one who is not, but we are confident that it is unwise. How can there be a real *union* between two persons who differ on that subject which, of all subjects, is the most important? If either party is in earnest, there must soon arise a struggle between them, which will result in one of three ways: the husband will bring over the wife to his opinion, or the wife will convert the husband to hers, or there will be a permanent and always growing estrangement between them. Such vital differences *should be settled before marriage;* and between persons fitted for life-long companionship, they usually can be. A woman who truly loves a man cannot, as a general rule, long resist a conviction which he strongly and conscientiously holds, and which he kindly and wisely explains. If she can, the fact, we think, ought to be accepted as an indication that she had better be the wife of another. There is no rule without exceptions; but, as a rule, we deem it safe to say that an important religious difference between husband and wife is fatal to the best interests and highest happiness of both.

OLD KENTUCK.—This correspondent sends us an anecdote which, he thinks, may amuse our readers. It is well known that Gen. Jackson, during the last few years of his life, was an extremely religious man, a member of the Presbyterian church, and a regular partaker of the communion. It chanced, on one Communion Sunday, that an old Kentucky soldier, who had fought under the General at New Orleans, and knew well what manner of man he had been in his fighting days, attended the Hermitage church and saw the aged warrior kneel reverently before the altar. He was transfixed with astonishment. After the service was over, he was observed to be unusually silent and thoughtful, and, upon being questioned, related what he had seen. He concluded his narrative thus: "When I saw the man who had fought armies, parties, cabinets, and had never fought without conquering, get down on his knees in that church, I said to myself, '*Well, when Gen. Jackson kneels, I tell you, boys, I think it's about time for me to knock under.*'" Four weeks after he joined the church, and lived and died an exemplary member.

J. R. M.—This is a disconsolate lover, who says he *knows* the girl he loves is a heartless flirt, and yet laments that she has refused him. What ridiculous infatuation. We expect some one will, one day, write to us a letter like this: "Dear Sir—Upon looking over a precipice yesterday I saw, upon a ledge of rock, a glittering substance that I took for a diamond. After a long and perilous effort I got near enough to it to discover, first, that I could not get it, and, secondly, that it was only a piece of quartz. *Dear* Mr. Editor, I am in the depths of despair. My life has ceased to be valuable to me. And, oh, sir, as if I were not already miserable enough, I see that detested quartz glittering down there still, and half a dozen fools of my acquaintance are risking their necks to get it. What am I to do?"

LAUNDRY.—A mangle is a heavy, cumbrous machine that is used in hotels and in most extensive laundries, for the purpose of smoothing sheets, towels, and other coarse articles. In England, it is a household article, but is not in general use in this country. It is nothing more than a large box filled with stones, which rests on wooden rollers. The linen to be smoothed is placed on a solid wooden bed or floor, and the rollers made to pass over it. We believe that several thicknesses of fabric can be done at once. In a large family, or boarding-house, the mangle may be used to advantage, and the cost need not exceed twenty dollars. Any carpenter can make one.

A SUBSCRIBER.—If a gentleman should accidentally meet a lady of his acquaintance in the street in the evening, the politest course for him to pursue would be not to appear to see the lady who was thus unavoidably detained out after dark, unless it were a *very* intimate acquaintance, or a relative; because speaking to her under such circumstances might trouble her more than *not* to do so. In case he apprehended any danger or annoyance to the lady, he could follow her at a proper distance, so as to be ready to render any protection that might be necessary.

THANKFUL.—Thankful says she has a lover who has but one fault, and that is, he tells lies. "Send me a receipe," she says, "for curing him, and I shall be under everlasting obligations to you." We know a way of curing young men who tell pleasant falsehoods to their sweethearts; but, oh Miss Thankful! the remedy is a million times worse than the disease. We do not recommend it, sure cure as it, for instead of pleasant lies you will have torrents of hateful truths. The remedy we mean is marriage.

W. J.—Diplomatists require a familiar acquaintance with three languages: first, their own; secondly, French; thirdly, the language of the country to which they are sent. French is indispensable; it is the very language of diplomacy. No one ought to be sent to represent the United States in Europe who does not know the three languages we have mentioned. An accomplished diplomatist speaks all languages.

DISHEARTENED WIFE.—The only service we can render this lady is to print a few sentences from her letter. They may reach the heart of some other unhappy woman's selfish husband, even if they do not affect the individual described: 'Here I stitch, stitch, stitch, all day, and tend the baby; and when my husband comes home in the evening, instead of saying, 'Wife, do you wish to go and see any of your friends, or attend a lecture, or shall I read to you while you sew so busily?' instead of this, he lights his cigar and walks off, perhaps to a card party, or a raffle, or, perhaps, merely to chat with some coarse men, who, of course, do not improve him. Nay, more, even on a Sunday evening he will not attend me to church, though I coax and beg him all day. I have seen it printed, that if wives made homes the happiest places in the world, husbands would stay in them. Now, how am I to do that? I try to be agreeable. I have borrowed books to read to him, for he used to say I was a good reader, and that he liked to hear me." The husband whom this simple statement cannot move, must be, we fear, selfish beyond remedy.

SIXPENCE says he is often embarrassed, on being helped first at table, whether to begin eating at once, or to wait till invited to eat, or until others are helped. "Sixpence" need not wait a great while, under such circumstances, though, of course, any unnecessary haste to begin should be avoided. He can be very deliberate, and consume a portion of the time in sipping a glass of water, or in spreading his napkin on his knees, or in conversation with those next to him, and so manage to see what the custom is at the table at which he is sitting, and then he can conform to it without embarrassment.

BION says that he recently waited upon a young lady to a party, and *towards morning* proposed going home. "Did I do right?" asks Bion, "or should I have waited still later, till the party broke up, or until the young lady herself proposed to leave?" We think, as the lady was young, and under your protection, that you did the right and proper thing in proposing to return her to her home at a reasonable hour, if "towards morning" can be called a reasonable hour. At all events, you did right in proposing to terminate your unreasonable stay at the party.

M. C. says that a gentleman has made her an offer of marriage, whose letters to her are so badly spelt as to be unpresentable; and that though he is very good, she has such a regard for education and literary endowments, that she fears to accept him, lest in some unguarded moment her dissatisfaction at his deficiencies in these respects should appear. We think you are quite right *not* to accept him, such being your feelings; because you would only ensure the misery of two people by marrying him under such circumstances.

VIRGINIA puts the following question: "When a young lady engages herself to a gentleman of small means, with the understanding that marriage shall ensue as soon as sufficient means are provided by him, and three years pass, and there is no prospect that these 'means' will ever be forthcoming, and the young man is in delicate health and the lady's papa refuses to assist the pair, what is to be done?" Give up all idea of marriage, of course. If the gentleman loves you, he will be the first to urge your doing so, for *both* your sakes.

MARY B.—Every case of deafness has to be treated specifically, at least to some degree, and your own case is probably no exception to the general rule. Deafness proceeds from so many causes that none but a physician can tell you whether or not any particular case is curable. It is said that sometimes it is caused by hard secretions of wax in the ear, which being removed, leave the hearing as perfect as before. This *may* be your case; consult some good doctor about it.

S. H. B.—A young man of seventeen is *not* too young to go in ladies' society. The acquaintance and society of refined young ladies would be the very best safeguard for a young man at that age. It would improve his manners better than any book of etiquette that he could study, since their merry, good-natured raillery at his defects would help him early and easily to avoid those things that would render him awkward in company, and which he might not *of himself* discover.

SIXTEEN.—"Last summer," says Sixteen, "I promised a gentleman, who was then paying attention to me, to work him a pair of slippers for a present; but since then matters have changed between us; and I wish to know if I should *now* keep a promise which would not have been made under the present state of things." Of course not, under a change of circumstances which would make the giving and the receiving of a present equally unpleasant.

AN INQUIRING MORTAL wants to know if it is proper to ask a father for an introduction to his daughter, or if a young man, who desires such a boon, must wait till he is asked. It is quite proper for you to ask it. We like this old-fashioned, manly, straightforward way of managing such matters, much better than the modern method of beginning an acquaintance with the young people without leave of their elders.

G. W. B. writes: "I am engaged to a young lady, to whom lately I proposed an evening walk, but when I called I found she had gone off with another young man. What shall I do under such circumstances?" Ask her kindly for an explanation of what seems so strange, if she refuse to give it, you certainly are not bound to continue your visits.

DUBUQUE.—Printing ink is a totally different article from writing ink, and far more difficult to make. We could not make the process clear without taking more space than we can spare. Nor could any inexperienced person succeed in making it as good or as cheap as it can be bought. The ingredients are, linseed oil, black rosin, soap, lampblack, and indigo.

SCHOOL-GIRLS.—That teacher who every now and then kisses some one of his young lady pupils, transcends the pedagogic prerogative, and should be dealt with by the parents of the young ladies. Such a man should be summarily ejected from the responsible office which he takes advantage of to perpetrate impertinences which, in such a case, amount almost to crimes.

A MOTHER asks, in the name of her children, whose feet she cannot keep dry, if India-rubber overshoes *are* unhealthy. We have been asked that question before, and can only say now, as then, that the experience of people varies so much on this subject that one can only decide by making the experiment for himself, and watching the result.

IVAN is "anxious to know," in case a gentleman is riding with a lady, and wishes to ride no further, "because the horse is tired," if it is proper for him to tell her so. Yes, if he is sure it is the *horse* that is "tired," and if he cares more for the animal's comfort than for the lady's enjoyment.

BLOOMFIELD.—The girl is right, and you have fairly lost her. She says truly, that a man who addresses indecent language to a young lady shows by that act that he does not respect her. Nor can any woman who respects herself accept love that is not founded upon esteem.

C. H. A.—The first syllable of the words, archbishop and archangel, is pronounced differently in the two words, because in one the *arch* goes before a consonant, and in the other before a vowel The rule is; arch before a vowel is pronounced ark; before a consonant, arch.

THREE-YEAR SUBSCRIBER.—It is the custom not only in New York for ladies to bow first to gentlemen, but almost everywhere else, where the parties are acquainted. The theory is, that the lady should be left free to recognize a gentleman or not, as she pleases.

ALBERT.—"What course ought a young man to pursue, when some young ladies having addressed a joint note to him, one of them requests to look at it, and then retains it in her possession?" He should gracefully yield to the wishes of the ladies, like a gallant youth.

CLERK.—When a lady thinks a gentleman intends spending the evening, should she ask him to lay off his overcoat? Certainly; though, had he meant to stay, he should not *wait* for *her* to ask him, but should leave his overcoat in the hall before entering the parlor.

CORIOLANUS.—The published works of Mr. Everett are the following: A Defence of Christianity, one volume of 500 pages; Orations and speeches, three large volumes; Life of Washington, one volume; Mount Vernon Papers, one volume.

ROBINSON.—Ask your "intimate gentleman friend" to introduce you to his charming sister, whom you have long secretly loved, but have never visited on account of your extreme bashfulness, and after the introduction let time and opportunity decide the rest.

PHILO.—You should *not* speak to a strange young girl in the street, whom you daily meet on your way to your business. It would be an insult. If you wish to know her, find a way to secure a proper introduction.

JULIA.—There are some kinds of dentrifice composed of charcoal which are said to be beneficial to the teeth. Dentists, we believe, generally give preference to pure water and a little nice soap, for this purpose.

JOHN, with much indignant comment and elaborate explanation, asks: "Ought a fellow to take *another* fellow's sled *without leave?*" No, John; such a "fellow" does not do as he would be done by.

D. Y.—You and your father have both done wrong: you, in engaging yourself to a young man without your father's consent; and he, in trying to make you marry another man whom you do not love.

DISPUTE.—The Siamese Twins are unique. We have no record of any other couple similarly joined.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*